THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

VOLUME II

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WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

At Sixty-Five

THE

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OF

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

EDITED BY

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VOLUME II

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GREEK—(continued)

XVIII. LUCIAN AND TIMOTHEUS[1]

ALEXANDRIA, *circa* 199 A.D.

(*Wks.*, ii., 1846 ; *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853 ; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

TIMOTHEUS. I am delighted, my cousin Lucian, to observe how popular are become your *Dialogues of the Dead.* Nothing can be so gratifying and satisfactory to a rightly disposed mind, as the subversion of imposture by the force of ridicule. It hath scattered the crowd of heathen Gods as if a thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of them. Now, I am confident you never would have assailed the false religion, unless you were prepared for the reception of the true. For it hath always been an indication of rashness and precipitancy, to throw down an edifice before you have collected materials for reconstruction.

LUCIAN. Of all metaphors and remarks, I believe this of yours, my good cousin Timotheus, is the most trite, and pardon me if I add, the most untrue. Surely we ought to remove an error the instant we detect it, although it may be out of our competence to state and establish what is right. A lie should be exposed as soon as born : we are not to wait until a healthier child is begotten. Whatever is evil in any way should be abolished. The husbandman never hesitates to eradicate weeds, or to burn them up, because he may not happen at the time to carry a sack on his shoulder with wheat or barley in it. Even if no wheat or barley is to be sown in future, the weeding and burning are in themselves beneficial, and something better will spring up.

[1] The identity of Landor's Timotheus is doubtful. Possibly, since Lucian is here mainly an outlet for Landor's own opinions, Timotheus should be regarded as an imaginary spokesman for ideas to which Landor was hostile.

TIMOTHEUS. That is not so certain.

LUCIAN. Doubt it as you may, at least you will allow that the temporary absence of evil is an advantage.

TIMOTHEUS. I think, O Lucian, you would reason much better if you would come over to our belief.

LUCIAN. I was unaware that belief is an encourager and guide to reason.

TIMOTHEUS. Depend upon it, there can be no stability of truth, no elevation of genius, without an unwavering faith in our holy mysteries. Babes and sucklings who are blest with it, stand higher, intellectually as well as morally, than stiff unbelievers and proud sceptics.

LUCIAN. I do not wonder that so many are firm holders of this novel doctrine. It is pleasant to grow wise and virtuous at so small an expenditure of thought or time. This saying of yours is exactly what I heard spoken with angry gravity not long ago.

TIMOTHEUS. Angry! no wonder! for it is impossible to keep our patience when truths so incontrovertible are assailed. What was your answer?

LUCIAN. My answer was: [1] If you talk in this manner, my honest friend, you will excite a spirit of ridicule in the gravest and most saturnine men, who never had let a laugh out of their breasts before. Lie to *me*, and welcome; but beware lest your own heart take you to task for it, reminding you that both anger and falsehood are reprehended by all religions, yours included.

TIMOTHEUS. Lucian! Lucian! you have always been called profane.

LUCIAN. For what? for having turned into ridicule the Gods whom you have turned out of house and home, and are reducing to dust?

TIMOTHEUS. Well; but you are equally ready to turn into ridicule the true and holy.

LUCIAN. In other words, to turn myself into a fool. He who brings ridicule to bear against Truth, finds in his hand a blade without a hilt. The most sparkling and pointed flame of wit flickers and expires against the incombustible walls of her sanctuary.

TIMOTHEUS. Fine talking! Do you know, you have really been called an atheist?

LUCIAN. Yes, yes; I know it well. But, in fact, I believe there are almost as few atheists in the world as there are Christians.

[1] Period after "was" in ed. of 1853.

TIMOTHEUS. How! as few? Most of Europe, most of Asia, most of Africa, is Christian.

LUCIAN. Show me five men in each who obey the commands of Christ, and I will show you five hundred in this very city who observe the dictates of Pythagoras. Every Pythagorean obeys his defunct philosopher; and almost every Christian disobeys his living God. Where is there one who practises the most important and the easiest of his commands, to abstain from strife? Men easily and perpetually find something new to quarrel about; but the objects of affection are limited in number, and grow up scantily and slowly. Even a small house is often too spacious for them, and there is a vacant seat at the table. Religious men themselves, when the Deity has bestowed on them everything they prayed for, discover, as a peculiar gift of Providence, some fault in the actions or opinions of a neighbour, and run it down, crying and shouting after it, with more alacrity and more clamour than boys would a leveret or a squirrel in the play-ground. Are our years and our intellects, and the word of God itself, given us for this, O Timotheus?

TIMOTHEUS. A certain latitude, a liberal construction——

LUCIAN. Ay, ay! These "liberal constructions" let loose all the worst passions into those "certain latitudes." The priests themselves, who ought to be the poorest, are the richest; who ought to be the most obedient, are the most refractory and rebellious. All trouble and all piety are vicarious. They send missionaries, at the cost of others, into foreign lands, to teach observances which they supersede at home. I have ridiculed the puppets of all features, all colours, all sizes, by which an impudent and audacious set of impostors have been gaining an easy livelihood these two thousand years.

TIMOTHEUS. Gently! gently! Ours have not been at it yet two hundred. We abolish all idolatry. We know that Jupiter was not the father of Gods and men: we know that Mars was not the Lord of Hosts: we know who is: we are quite at ease upon that question.

LUCIAN. Are you so fanatical, my good Timotheus, as to imagine that the Creator of the world cares a fig by what appellation you adore him? whether you call him on one occasion Jupiter, on another Apollo? I will not add Mars or Lord of Hosts; for, wanting as I may be in piety, I am not, and never was, so impious as to call the Maker the Destroyer; to call him Lord of Hosts who, according to your holiest of books, declared so lately and so plainly

that he permits no hosts at all; much less will he take the command of one against another. Would any man in his senses go down into the cellar, and seize first an amphora from the right, and then an amphora from the left, for the pleasure of breaking them in pieces, and of letting out the wine he had taken the trouble to put in? We are not contented with attributing to the Gods our own infirmities; we make them even more wayward, even more passionate, even more exigent and more malignant: and then some of us try to coax and cajole them, and others run away from them outright.

TIMOTHEUS. No wonder: but only in regard to yours: and even those are types.

LUCIAN. There are honest men who occupy their lives in discovering types for all things.

TIMOTHEUS. Truly and rationally thou speakest now. Honest men and wise men above their fellows are they, and the greatest of all discoverers. There are many types above thy reach, O Lucian!

LUCIAN. And one which my mind, and perhaps yours also, can comprehend. There is in Italy, I hear, on the border of a quiet and beautiful lake,* a temple dedicated to Diana; the priests of which temple have murdered each his predecessor for unrecorded ages.

TIMOTHEUS. What of that? They were idolaters.

LUCIAN. They made the type, however: take it home with you, and hang it up in your temple.

TIMOTHEUS. Why! you seem to have forgotten on a sudden that I am a Christian: you are talking of the heathens.

LUCIAN. True! true! I am near upon eighty years of age, and to my poor eyesight one thing looks very like another.

TIMOTHEUS. You are too indifferent.

LUCIAN. No indeed. I love those best who quarrel least, and who bring into public use the most civility and good-humour.

TIMOTHEUS. Our holy religion inculcates this duty especially.

LUCIAN. Such being the case, a pleasant story will not be thrown away upon you. Xenophanes, my townsman of Samosata, was resolved to buy a new horse: he had tried him, and liked him well enough. I asked him why he wished to dispose of his old one, knowing how sure-footed he was, how easy in his paces, and how quiet in his pasture. "Very true, O Lucian," said he; "the horse is a clever horse; noble eye, beautiful figure, stately step; rather

* The lake of Nemi.—W. S. L.

too fond of neighing and of shuffling a little in the vicinity of a mare ; but tractable and good-tempered." "I would not have parted with him then," said I. "The fact is," replied he, "my grandfather, whom I am about to visit, likes no horses but what are *Saturnized.* To-morrow I begin my journey : come and see me set out." I went at the hour appointed. The new purchase looked quiet and demure ; but *he* also pricked up his ears, and gave sundry other tokens of equinity, when the more interesting part of his fellow-creatures came near him. As the morning oats began to operate, he grew more and more unruly, and snapped at one friend of Xenophanes, and sidled against another, and gave a kick at a third. "All in play ! all in play !" said Xenophanes ; "his nature is more of a lamb's than a horse's." However, these mute salutations being over, away went Xenophanes. In the evening, when my lamp had just been replenished for the commencement of my studies, my friend came in striding as if he still were across the saddle. "I am apprehensive, O Xenophanes," said I, "your new acquisition has disappointed you." "Not in the least," answered he. "I do assure you, O Lucian, he is the very horse I was looking out for." On my requesting him to be seated, he no more thought of doing so than if it had been in the presence of the Persian king. I then handed my lamp to him, telling him (as was true) it contained all the oil I had in the house, and protesting I should be happier to finish my *Dialogue* in the morning. He took the lamp into my bed-room, and appeared to be much refreshed on his return. Nevertheless, he treated his chair with great delicacy and circumspection, and evidently was afraid of breaking it by too sudden a descent I did not revert to the horse : but he went on of his own accord. "I declare to you, O Lucian, it is impossible for me to be mistaken in a palfrey. My new one is the only one in Samosata that could carry me at one stretch to my grandfather's." "But *has* he ?" said I, timidly. "No ; he has not yet," answered my friend. "To-morrow then, I am afraid, we really must lose you." "No," said he ; "the horse does trot hard : but he is the better for that : I shall soon get used to him." In fine, my worthy friend deferred his visit to his grandfather : his rides were neither long nor frequent : he was ashamed to part with his purchase, boasted of him everywhere, and, humane as he is by nature, could almost have broken on the cross the quiet contented owner of old Bucephalus.

TIMOTHEUS. Am I to understand by this, O cousin Lucian, that I ought to be contented with the impurities of paganism?

LUCIAN. Unless you are very unreasonable. A moderate man finds plenty in it.

TIMOTHEUS. We abominate the deities who patronise them, and we hurl down the images of the monsters.

LUCIAN. Sweet cousin! be tenderer to my feelings. In such a tempest as this, my spark of piety may be blown out. Hold your hand cautiously before it, until I can find my way. Believe me, no deities (out of their own houses) patronise immorality; none patronise unruly passions, least of all the fierce and ferocious. In my opinion, you are wrong in throwing down the images of those among them who look on you benignly: the others I give up to your discretion. But I think it impossible to stand habitually in the presence of a sweet and open countenance, graven or depicted, without in some degree partaking of the character it expresses. Never tell any man that he can derive no good, in his devotions, from this or from that: abolish neither hope nor gratitude.

TIMOTHEUS. God is offended at vain efforts to represent him.

LUCIAN. No such thing, my dear Timotheus. If you knew him at all, you would not talk of him so irreverently. He is pleased, I am convinced, at every effort to resemble him, at every wish to remind both ourselves and others of his benefits. You can not think so often of him without an effigy.

TIMOTHEUS. What likeness is there in the perishable to the unperishable?

LUCIAN. I see no reason why there may not be a similitude. All that the senses can comprehend may be represented by any material; clay or fig-tree, bronze or ivory, porphyry or gold. Indeed I have a faint remembrance that, according to your sacred volumes, man was made by God after his own image. If so, man's intellectual powers are worthily exercised in attempting to collect all that is beautiful, serene, and dignified, and to bring him back to earth again by showing him the noblest of his gifts, the work most like his own. Surely he cannot hate or abandon those who thus cherish his memory, and thus implore his regard. Perishable and imperfect is everything human: but in these very qualities I find the best reason for striving to attain what is least so. Would not any father be gratified by seeing his child attempt to delineate his features?

And would not the gratification be rather increased than diminished by his incapacity? How long shall the narrow mind of man stand between goodness and omnipotence? Perhaps the effigy of your ancestor Isknos is unlike him: whether it is or no, you can not tell: but you keep it in your hall, and would be angry if anybody broke it to pieces or defaced it. Be quite sure there are many who think as much of their Gods as you think of your ancestor Isknos, and who see in their images as good a likeness. Let men have their own way, especially their way to the temples. It is easier to drive them out of one road than into another. Our judicious and good-humoured Trajan[1] has found it necessary on many occasions to chastise the law-breakers of your sect, indifferent as he is what Gods are worshipped, so long as their followers are orderly and decorous. The fiercest of the Dacians never knocked off Jupiter's beard, or broke an arm of Venus: and the emperor will hardly tolerate in those who have received a liberal education what he would punish in barbarians. Do not wear out his patience: try rather to imitate his equity, his equanimity, and forbearance.

TIMOTHEUS. I have been listening to you with much attention, O Lucian, for I seldom have heard you speak with such gravity. And yet, O cousin Lucian! I really do find in you a sad deficiency of that wisdom which alone is of any value. You talk of Trajan! what is Trajan?

LUCIAN. A beneficent citizen, an impartial judge, a sagacious ruler; the comrade of every brave soldier, the friend and associate of every man eminent in genius, throughout his empire, the empire of the world. All arts, all sciences, all philosophies, all religions, are protected by him. Wherefore his name will flourish, when the proudest of these have perished in the land of Egypt. Philosophies and religions will strive, struggle, and suffocate one another. Priesthoods, I know not how many, are quarrelling and scuffling in the street at this instant, all calling on Trajan to come and knock an antagonist on the head; and the most peaceful of them, as it wishes to be thought, proclaiming him an infidel for turning a deaf ear to its imprecations. Mankind was never so happy as under

[1] The previous reference to Lucian's age, suggesting *c.* 40 A.D. for the date of this Conversation, the vague suggestion that Timotheus was the notorious Bishop of Alexandria, *c.* 379 A.D., and this reference to Trajan, who died 117 A.D., confuse the chronology.

his guidance: and he has nothing now to do but to put down the battles of the Gods. If they must fight it out, he will insist on our neutrality.

TIMOTHEUS. He has no authority and no influence over us in matters of faith. A wise and upright man, whose serious thoughts lead him forward to religion, will never be turned aside from it by any worldly consideration or any human force.

LUCIAN. True: but mankind is composed not entirely of the upright and the wise. I suspect that we may find some, here and there, who are rather too fond of novelties in the furniture of temples: and I have observed that new sects are apt to warp, crack, and split, under the heat they generate. Our homely old religion has run into fewer quarrels, ever since the Centaurs and Lapiths (whose controversy was on a subject quite comprehensible), than yours has engendered in twenty years.

TIMOTHEUS. We shall obviate that inconvenience by electing a supreme pontiff to decide all differences. It has been seriously thought about long ago; and latterly we have been making out an ideal series down to the present day, in order that our successors in the ministry may have stepping-stones up to the fountain-head. At first the disseminators of our doctrines were equal in their commission: we do not approve of this any longer, for reasons of our own.

LUCIAN. You may shut, one after another, all our other temples, but, I plainly see, you will never shut the temple of Janus. The Roman empire will never lose its pugnacious character while your sect exists. The only danger is, lest the fever rage internally and consume the vitals. If you sincerely wish your religion to be long-lived, maintain in it the spirit of its constitution, and keep it patient, humble, abstemious, domestic, and zealous only in the services of humanity. Whenever the higher of your priesthood shall attain the riches they are aiming at, the people will envy their possessions and revolt from their impostures. Do not let them seize upon the palace, and shove their God again into the manger.

TIMOTHEUS. Lucian! Lucian! I call this impiety.

LUCIAN. So do I, and shudder at its consequences. Caverns which at first look inviting, the roof at the aperture green with overhanging ferns and clinging mosses, then glittering with native gems and with water as sparkling and pellucid, freshening the air

all around; these caverns grow darker and closer, until you find yourself among animals that shun the daylight, adhering to the walls, hissing along the bottom, flapping, screeching, gaping, glaring, making you shrink at the sounds, and sicken at the smells, and afraid to advance or retreat.

TIMOTHEUS. To what can this refer? Our caverns open on verdure, and terminate in veins of gold.

LUCIAN. Veins of gold, my good Timotheus, such as your excavations have opened and are opening, in the spirit of avarice and ambition, will be washed (or as you would say *purified*) in streams of blood. Arrogance, intolerance, resistance to authority and contempt of law, distinguish your aspiring sectarians from the other subjects of the empire.

TIMOTHEUS. Blindness hath often a calm and composed countenance: but, my cousin Lucian! it usually hath also the advantage of a cautious and a measured step. It hath pleased God to blind you, like all the other adversaries of our faith: but he has given you no staff to lean upon. You object against us the very vices from which we are peculiarly exempt.

LUCIAN. Then it is all a story, a fable, a fabrication, about one of your earlier leaders cutting off with his sword a servant's ear. If the accusation is true, the offence is heavy. For not only was the wounded man innocent of any provocation, but he is represented as being in the service of the High Priest at Jerusalem. Moreover, from the direction and violence of the blow, it is evident that his life was aimed at. According to law, you know, my dear cousin, all the party might have been condemned to death, as accessories to an attempt at murder. I am unwilling to think so unfavourably of your sect; nor indeed do I see the possibility that, in such an outrage, the principal could be pardoned. For any man but a soldier to go about armed is against the Roman law, which, on that head, as on many others, is borrowed from the Athenian: and it is incredible that in any civilised country so barbarous a practice can be tolerated. Travellers do indeed relate that, in certain parts of India there are princes at whose courts even civilians are armed. But *traveller* hath occasionally the same signification as *liar*, and *India* as *fable*. However, if the practice really does exist in that remote and rarely visited country, it must be in some region of it very far beyond the Indus or the Ganges: for the nations situated

between those rivers are, and were in the reign of Alexander, and some thousand years before his birth, as civilised as the Europeans; nay, incomparably more courteous, more industrious, and more pacific; the three grand criterions.

But answer my question: is there any foundation for so mischievous a report?

TIMOTHEUS. There was indeed, so to say, an ear, or something of the kind, abscinded; probably by mistake. But High Priests' servants are propense to follow the swaggering gait of their masters, and to carry things with a high hand, in such wise as to excite the choler of the most quiet. If you knew the character of the eminently holy man who punished the atrocious insolence of that bloody-minded wretch, you would be sparing of your animadversions. We take him for our model.

LUCIAN. I see you do.

TIMOTHEUS. We proclaim him Prince of the Apostles.

LUCIAN. I am the last in the world to question his princely qualifications: but, if I might advise you, it should be to follow in preference him whom you acknowledge to be an unerring guide; who delivered to you his ordinances with his own hand, equitable, plain, explicit, compendious, and complete; who committed no violence, who countenanced no injustice, whose compassion was without weakness, whose love was without frailty, whose life was led in humility, in purity, in beneficence, and, at the end, laid down in obedience to his father's will.

TIMOTHEUS. Ah, Lucian! what strangely imperfect notions! all that is little.

LUCIAN. Enough to follow.

TIMOTHEUS. Not enough to compel others. I did indeed hope, O Lucian! that you would again come forward with the irresistible arrows of your wit, and unite with us against our adversaries. By what you have just spoken, I doubt no longer that you approve of the doctrines inculcated by the blessed founder of our religion.

LUCIAN. To the best of my understanding.

TIMOTHEUS. So ardent is my desire for the salvation of your precious soul, O my cousin! that I would devote many hours of every day to disputation with you, on the principal points of our Christian controversy.

LUCIAN. Many thanks, my kind Timotheus! But I think the

blessed founder of your religion very strictly forbade that there should be *any* points of controversy. Not only has he prohibited them on the doctrines he delivered, but on everything else. Some of the most obstinate might never have doubted of his divinity, if the conduct of his followers had not repelled them from the belief of it. How can they imagine you sincere when they see you disobedient? It is in vain for you to protest that you worship the God of Peace, when you are found daily in the courts and market-places with clenched fists and bloody noses. I acknowledge the full value of your offer; but really I am as anxious for the salvation of your precious time, as you appear to be for the salvation of my precious soul; particularly since I am come to the conclusion that souls can not be lost, and that time can.

TIMOTHEUS. We mean by *salvation* exemption from eternal torments.

LUCIAN. Among all my old Gods and their children, morose as some of the senior are, and mischievous as are some of the junior, I have never represented the worst of them as capable of inflicting such atrocity. Passionate and capricious and unjust are several of them; but a skin stripped off the shoulder, and a liver tossed to a vulture, are among the worst of their inflictions.

TIMOTHEUS. This is scoffing.

LUCIAN. Nobody but an honest man has a right to scoff at anything.

TIMOTHEUS. And yet people of a very different cast are usually those who scoff the most.

LUCIAN. We are apt to push forward at that which we are without: the low-born at titles and distinctions, the silly at wit, the knave at the semblance of probity. But I was about to remark, that an honest man may fairly scoff at all philosophies and religions which are proud, ambitious, intemperate, and contradictory. The thing most adverse to the spirit and essence of them all, is falsehood. It is the business of the philosophical to seek truth: it is the office of the religious to worship her; under what name, is unimportant. The falsehood that the tongue commits is slight in comparison with what is conceived by the heart, and executed by the whole man, throughout life. If, professing love and charity to the human race at large, I quarrel day after day with my next neighbour; if, professing that the rich can never see God, I spend in the luxuries of

my household a talent monthly; if, professing to place so much confidence in his word, that, in regard to worldly weal, I need take no care for to-morrow, I accumulate stores even beyond what would be necessary, though I quite distrusted both his providence and his veracity; if, professing that "he who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord," I question the Lord's security, and haggle with him about the amount of the loan; if, professing that I am their steward, I keep ninety-nine parts in the hundred as the emolument of my stewardship; how, when God hates liars and punishes defrauders, shall I, and other such thieves and hypocrites, fare hereafter?

TIMOTHEUS. Let us hope there are few of them.

LUCIAN. We can not hope against what is: we may however hope that in future these will be fewer; but never while the overseers of a priesthood look for offices out of it, taking the lead in politics, in debate, and strife. Such men bring to ruin all religion, but their own first, and raise unbelievers not only in divine providence, but in human faith.

TIMOTHEUS. If they leave the altar for the market-place, the sanctuary for the senate-house, and agitate party questions instead of Christian verities, everlasting punishments await them.

LUCIAN. Everlasting?

TIMOTHEUS. Certainly: at the very least. I rank it next to heresy in the catalogue of sins; and the church supports my opinion.

LUCIAN. I have no measure for ascertaining the distance between the opinions and practices of men: I only know that they stand widely apart in all countries on the most important occasions: but this newly-hatched word *heresy*, alighting on my ear, makes me rub it. A beneficent God descends on earth in the human form, to redeem us from the slavery of sin, from the penalty of our passions: can you imagine he will punish an error in opinion, or even an obstinacy in unbelief, with everlasting torments? Supposing it highly criminal to refuse to weigh a string of arguments, or to cross-question a herd of witnesses, on a subject which no experience hath warranted and no sagacity can comprehend; supposing it highly criminal to be contented with the religion which our parents taught us, which they bequeathed to us as the most precious of possessions, and which it would have broken their hearts if they had foreseen we should cast aside; yet are eternal

pains the just retribution of what at worst is but indifference and supineness?

TIMOTHEUS. Our religion has clearly this advantage over yours: it teaches us to regulate our passions.

LUCIAN. Rather say it *tells* us. I believe all religions do the same; some indeed more emphatically and primarily than others; but *that* indeed would be incontestably of divine origin, and acknowledged at once by the most sceptical, which should thoroughly teach it. Now, my friend Timotheus, I think you are about seventy-five years of age.

TIMOTHEUS. Nigh upon it.

LUCIAN. Seventy-five years, according to my calculation, are equivalent to seventy-five Gods and Goddesses in regulating our passions for us, if we speak of the amatory, which are always thought in every stage of life the least to be pardoned.

TIMOTHEUS. Execrable!

LUCIAN. I am afraid the sourest hang longest on the tree. Mimnermus says,*

> In early youth we often sigh
> Because our pulses beat so high;
> All this we conquer, and at last
> We sigh that we are grown so chaste.

TIMOTHEUS. Swine!

LUCIAN. No animal sighs oftener or louder. But, my dear cousin, the quiet swine is less troublesome and less odious than the grumbling and growling and fierce hyæna, which will not let the dead rest in their graves. We may be merry with the follies and even the vices of men, without doing or wishing them harm: punishment should come from the magistrate, not from us. If we are to give pain to anyone because he thinks differently from us, we ought to begin by inflicting a few smart stripes on ourselves; for both upon light and upon grave occasions, if we have thought much and often, our opinions must have varied. We are always fond of seizing and managing what appertains to others. In the savage state all belongs to all. Our neighbours the Arabs, who stand between barbarism and civilisation, waylay travellers, and plunder

* Query, *where?*[1]

[1] Footnote added in 1876, *Works*.

their equipage and their gold. The wilier marauders in Alexandria start up from under the shadow of temples, force us to change our habiliments for theirs, and strangle us with fingers dipped in holy water if we say they sit uneasily.

TIMOTHEUS. This is not the right view of things.

LUCIAN. That is never the right view which lets in too much light. About two centuries have elapsed since your religion was founded. Show me the pride it has humbled; show me the cruelty it has mitigated; show me the lust it has extinguished or repressed. I have now been living ten years in Alexandria; and you never will accuse me, I think, of any undue partiality for the system in which I was educated: yet, from all my observation, I find no priest or elder, in your community, wise, tranquil, firm, and sedate, as Epicurus, and Carneades, and Zeno, and Epictetus; or indeed in the same degree as some who were often called forth into political and military life; Epaminondas, for instance, and Phocion.

TIMOTHEUS. I pity them from my soul: they were ignorant of the truth: they are lost, my cousin! take my word for it, they are lost men.

LUCIAN. Unhappily, they are. I wish we had them back again; or that, since we have lost them, we could at least find among us the virtues they left for our example.

TIMOTHEUS. Alas, my poor cousin! you too are blind: you do not understand the plainest words, nor comprehend those verities which are the most evident and palpable. Virtues! if the poor wretches had any, they were false ones.

LUCIAN. Scarcely ever has there been a politician, in any free state, without much falsehood and duplicity. I have named the most illustrious exceptions. Slender and irregular lines of a darker colour run along the bright blade that decides the fate of nations, and may indeed be necessary to the perfection of its temper. The great warrior hath usually his darker lines of character, necessary (it may be) to constitute his greatness. No two men possess the same quantity of the same virtues, if they have many or much. We want some which do not far outstep us, and which we may follow with the hope of reaching; we want others to elevate, and others to defend us. The order of things would be less beautiful without this variety. Without the ebb and flow of our passions,

but guided and moderated by a beneficent light above, the ocean of life would stagnate; and zeal, devotion, eloquence, would become dead carcasses, collapsing and wasting on unprofitable sands. The vices of some men cause the virtues of others, as corruption is the parent of fertility.

TIMOTHEUS. O my cousin! this doctrine is diabolical.

LUCIAN. What is it?

TIMOTHEUS. Diabolical: a strong expression in daily use among us. We turn it a little from its origin.

LUCIAN. Timotheus, I love to sit by the side of a clear water, although there is nothing in it but naked stones. Do not take the trouble to muddy the stream of language for my benefit: I am not about to fish in it.

TIMOTHEUS. Well; we will speak about things which come nearer to your apprehension. I only wish you were somewhat less indifferent in your choice between the true and the false.

LUCIAN. We take it for granted that what is not true must be false.

TIMOTHEUS. Surely we do.

LUCIAN. This is erroneous.

TIMOTHEUS. Are you grown captious? Pray explain.

LUCIAN. What is not true, I need not say, must be untrue: but that alone is false which is intended to deceive. A witness may be mistaken, yet you would not call him a false witness unless he asserted what he knew to be false.

TIMOTHEUS. Quibbles upon words!

LUCIAN. On words, on quibbles, if you please to call distinctions so, rests the axis of the intellectual world. A winged word hath stuck ineradicably in a million hearts, and envenomed every hour throughout their hard pulsation: on a winged word hath hung the destiny of nations: on a winged word hath human wisdom been willing to cast the immortal soul, and to leave it dependent for all its future happiness. It is because a word is unsusceptible of explanation, or because they who employed it were impatient of any, that enormous evils have prevailed, not only against our common sense, but against our common humanity. Hence the most pernicious of absurdities, far exceeding in folly and mischief the worship of three-score Gods; namely, that an implicit faith in what outrages our reason, which we know is God's gift and bestowed on us

for our guidance, that this weak, blind, stupid faith is surer of his favour than the constant practice of every human virtue. They at whose hands one prodigious lie, such as this, hath been accepted, may reckon on their influence in the dissemination of many smaller, and may turn them easily to their own account. Be sure they will do it sooner or later. The fly floats on the surface for a while, but up springs the fish at last and swallows it.

TIMOTHEUS. Was ever man so unjust as you are? The abominable old priesthoods are avaricious and luxurious: ours is willing to stand or fall by maintaining its ordinances of fellowship and frugality. Point out to me a priest of our religion whom you could, by any temptation or entreaty, so far mislead, that he shall reserve for his own consumption one loaf, one plate of lentils, while another poor Christian hungers. In the meanwhile the priests of Isis are proud and wealthy, and admit none of the indigent to their tables. And now, to tell you the whole truth, my cousin Lucian, I come to you this morning to propose that we should lay our heads together and contrive a merry dialogue on these said priests of Isis. What say you?

LUCIAN. These said priests of Isis have already been with me, several times, on a similar business in regard to yours.

TIMOTHEUS. Malicious wretches! What slyness! what perfidy!

LUCIAN. Beside, they have attempted to persuade me that your religion is borrowed from theirs, altering a name a little, and laying the scene of action in a corner, in the midst of obscurity and ruins.

TIMOTHEUS. The wicked dogs! the hellish liars! We have nothing in common with such vile impostors. Are they not ashamed of taking such unfair means of lowering us in the estimation of our fellow-citizens? And so, they artfully came to you, craving any spare jibe to throw against us! They lie open to these weapons: we do not: we stand above the malignity, above the strength, of man. You would do justly in turning their own devices against them: it would be amusing to see how they would look. If you refuse me, I am resolved to write a *Dialogue of the Dead*, myself, and to introduce these hypocrites in it.

LUCIAN. Consider well first, my good Timotheus, whether you can do any such thing with propriety; I mean to say judiciously in regard to composition.

LUCIAN AND TIMOTHEUS

Timotheus. I always thought you generous and open-hearted, and quite inaccessible to jealousy.

Lucian. Let nobody ever profess himself so much as that: for, although he may be insensible of the disease, it lurks within him, and only waits its season to break out. But really, my cousin, at present I feel no symptoms: and, to prove that I am ingenuous and sincere with you, these are my reasons for dissuasion. We believers in the Homeric family of Gods and Goddesses, believe also in the locality of Tartarus and Elysium. We entertain no doubt whatever, that the passions of men and demigods and Gods, are nearly the same above-ground and below; and that Achilles would dispatch his spear through the body of any shade who would lead Briseïs too far among the myrtles, or attempt to throw the halter over the ears of any chariot-horse belonging to him in the meads of asphodel. We admit no doubt of these verities, delivered down to us from the ages when Theseus and Hercules had descended into Hades itself. Instead of a few stadions in a cavern, with a bank and a bower at the end of it, under a very small portion of our diminutive Hellas, you Christians possess the whole cavity of the earth for punishment, and the whole convex of the sky for felicity.

Timotheus. Our passions are burnt out amid the fires of purification, and our intellects are elevated to the enjoyment of perfect intelligence.

Lucian. How silly then and incongruous would it be, not to say how impious, to represent your people as no better and no wiser than they were before, and discoursing on subjects which no longer can or ought to concern them. Christians must think your *Dialogue of the Dead* no less irreligious than their opponents think mine, and infinitely more absurd. If indeed you are resolved on this form of composition, there is no topic which may not, with equal facility, be discussed on earth; and you may intersperse as much ridicule as you please, without any fear of censure for inconsistency or irreverence. Hitherto such writers have confined their view mostly to speculative points, sophistic reasonings, and sarcastic interpellations.

Timotheus. Ha! you are always fond of throwing a little pebble at the lofty Plato, whom we, on the contrary, are ready to receive (in a manner) as one of ourselves.

Lucian. To throw pebbles is a very uncertain way of showing

where lie defects. Whenever I have mentioned him seriously, I have brought forward, not accusations, but passages from his writings, such as no philosopher or scholar, or moralist, can defend.

TIMOTHEUS. His doctrines are too abstruse and too sublime for you.

LUCIAN. Solon, Anaxagoras, and Epicurus, are more sublime, if truth is sublimity.

TIMOTHEUS. Truth is indeed; for God is truth.

LUCIAN. We are upon earth to learn what can be learnt upon earth, and not to speculate on what can never be. This you, O Timotheus, may call philosophy: to me it appears the idlest of curiosity; for every other kind may teach us something, and may lead to more beyond. Let men learn what benefits men; above all things, to contract their wishes, to calm their passions, and, more especially, to dispell their fears. Now these are to be dispelled, not by collecting clouds, but by piercing and scattering them. In the dark we may imagine depths and heights immeasurable, which, if a torch be carried right before us, we find it easy to leap across. Much of what we call sublime is only the residue of infancy, and the worst of it.

The philosophers I quoted are too capacious for schools and systems. Without noise, without ostentation, without mystery, not quarrelsome, not captious, not frivolous, their lives were commentaries on their doctrines. Never evaporating into mist, never stagnating into mire, their limpid and broad morality runs parallel with the lofty summits of their genius.

TIMOTHEUS. Genius! was ever genius like Plato's?

LUCIAN. The most admired of his *Dialogues*, his *Banquet*, is beset with such puerilities, deformed with such pedantry, and disgraced with such impurity, that none but the thickest beards, and chiefly of the philosophers and the satyrs, should bend over it. On a former occasion he has given us a specimen of history, than which nothing in our language is worse: here he gives us one of poetry, in honour of Love, for which the God has taken ample vengeance on him, by perverting his taste and feelings. The grossest of all the absurdities in this dialogue is, attributing to Aristophanes, so much of a scoffer and so little of a visionary, the silly notion of male and female having been originally complete in one person, and walking circuitously. He may be joking: who knows?

TIMOTHEUS. Forbear! forbear! do not call this notion a silly one: he took it from our Holy Scriptures, but perverted it somewhat. Woman was made from man's rib, and did not require to be cut asunder all the way down: this is no proof of bad reasoning, but merely of misinterpretation.

LUCIAN. If you would rather have bad reasoning, I will adduce a little of it. Farther on, he wishes to extoll the wisdom of Agathon by attributing to him such a sentence as this:

"It is evident that Love is the most beautiful of the Gods, *because* he is the youngest of them."

Now even on earth, the youngest is not always the most beautiful; how infinitely less cogent then is the argument when we come to speak of the immortals, with whom age can have no concern! There was a time when Vulcan was the youngest of the Gods: was he also, at that time, and for that reason, the most beautiful? Your philosopher tells us, moreover, that "Love is of all deities the most *liquid;* else he never could fold himself about everything, and flow into and out of men's souls."

The three last sentences of Agathon's rhapsody are very harmonious, and exhibit the finest specimen of Plato's style; but we, accustomed as we are to hear him lauded for his poetical diction, should hold that poem a very indifferent one which left on the mind so superficial an impression. The garden of Academus is flowery without fragrance, and dazzling without warmth: I am ready to dream away an hour in it after dinner, but I think it unsalutary for a night's repose. So satisfied was Plato with his *Banquet*, that he says of himself, in the person of Socrates, "How can I or anyone but find it difficult to speak after a discourse so eloquent? It would have been wonderful if the brilliancy of the sentences at the end of it, and the choice of expression throughout, had not astonished all the auditors. I, who can never say anything nearly so beautiful, would if possible have made my escape, and have fairly run off for shame." He had indeed much better run off before he made so wretched a pun on the name of Gorgias. "I dreaded," says he, "lest Agathon, *measuring my discourse by the head of the eloquent Gorgias, should turn me to stone* for inability of utterance."

Was there ever joke more frigid? What painful twisting of unelastic stuff! If Socrates was the wisest man in the world, it

would require another oracle to persuade us, after this, that he was the wittiest. But surely a small share of common sense would have made him abstain from hazarding such failures. He falls on his face in very flat and very dry ground; and, when he gets up again, his quibbles are well-nigh as tedious as his witticisms. However, he has the presence of mind to throw them on the shoulders of Diotima, whom he calls a prophetess, and who, ten years before the Plague broke out in Athens, obtained from the Gods (he tells us) that delay. Ah! the Gods were doubly mischievous: they sent her first. Read her words, my cousin, as delivered by Socrates; and if they have another Plague in store for us, you may avert it by such an act of expiation.

TIMOTHEUS. The world will have ended before ten years are over.

LUCIAN. Indeed!

TIMOTHEUS. It has been pronounced.

LUCIAN. How the threads of belief and unbelief run woven close together in the whole web of human life! Come, come; take courage; you will have time for your *Dialogue*. Enlarge the circle; enrich it with a variety of matter, enliven it with a multitude of characters, occupy the intellect of the thoughtful, the imagination of the lively; spread the board with solid viands, delicate rarities, and sparkling wines; and throw, along the whole extent of it, geniality and festal crowns.

TIMOTHEUS. What writer of dialogues hath ever done this, or undertaken, or conceived, or hoped it?

LUCIAN. None whatever; yet surely you yourself may, when even your babes and sucklings are endowed with abilities incomparably greater than our niggardly old Gods have bestowed on the very best of us.

TIMOTHEUS. I wish, my dear Lucian, you would let our babes and sucklings lie quiet, and say no more about them: as for your Gods, I leave them at your mercy. Do not impose on me the performance of a task in which Plato himself, if he had attempted it, would have failed.

LUCIAN. No man ever detected false reasoning with more quickness; but unluckily he called in Wit at the exposure; and Wit, I am sorry to say, held the lowest place in his household. He sadly mistook the qualities of his mind in attempting the facetious: or

rather, he fancied he possessed one quality more than belonged to him. But, if he himself had not been a worse quibbler than any whose writings are come down to us, we might have been gratified by the exposure of wonderful acuteness wretchedly applied. It is no small service to the community to turn into ridicule the grave impostors, who are contending which of them shall guide and govern us, whether in politics or religion. There are always a few who will take the trouble to walk down among the sea-weeds and slippery stones, for the sake of showing their credulous fellow-citizens that skins filled with sand, and set upright at the forecastle, are neither men nor merchandise.

TIMOTHEUS. I can bring to mind, O Lucian, no writer possessing so great a variety of wit as you.

LUCIAN. No man ever possessed any variety of this gift; and the holder is not allowed to exchange the quality for another. Banter (and such is Plato's) never grows large, never sheds its bristles, and never do they soften into the humorous or the facetious.

TIMOTHEUS. I agree with you that banter is the worst species of wit. We have indeed no correct idea what persons those really were whom Plato drags by the ears, to undergo slow torture under Socrates. One sophist, I must allow, is precisely like another: no discrimination of character, none of manner, none of language.

LUCIAN. He wanted the fancy and fertility of Aristophanes.

TIMOTHEUS. Otherwise, his mind was more elevated and more poetical.

LUCIAN. Pardon me if I venture to express my dissent in both particulars. Knowledge of the human heart, and discrimination of character, are requisites of the poet. Few ever have possessed them in an equal degree with Aristophanes: Plato has given no indication of either.

TIMOTHEUS. But consider his imagination.

LUCIAN. On what does it rest? He is nowhere so imaginative as in his *Polity*. Nor is there any state in the world that is, or would be, governed by it. One day you may find him at his counter in the midst of old-fashioned toys, which crack and crumble under his fingers while he exhibits and recommends them: another day, while he is sitting on a goat's bladder, I may discover his bald head surmounting an enormous mass of loose chaff and uncleanly feathers,

which he would persuade you is the pleasantest and healthiest of beds, and that dreams descend on it from the Gods.

> "Open your mouth and shut your eyes and see what Zeus shall send you,"

says Aristophanes in his favourite metre. In this helpless condition of closed optics and hanging jaw, we find the followers of Plato. It is by shutting their eyes that they see, and by opening their mouths that they apprehend. Like certain broad-muzzled dogs, all stand equally stiff and staunch, although few scent the game, and their lips wag and water at whatever distance from the net. We must leave them with their hands hanging down before them, confident that they are wiser than we are, were it only for this attitude of humility. It is amusing to see them in it before the tall well-robed Athenian, while he mis-spells the charms and plays clumsily the tricks he acquired from the conjurers here in Egypt. I wish you better success with the same materials. But in my opinion all philosophers should speak clearly. The highest things are the purest and brightest; and the best writers are those who render them the most intelligible to the world below. In the arts and sciences, and particularly in music and metaphysics, this is difficult: but the subjects not being such as lie within the range of the community, I lay little stress upon them, and wish authors to deal with them as they best may, only beseeching that they recompense us, by bringing within our comprehension the other things with which they are intrusted for us. The followers of Plato fly off indignantly from any such proposal. If I ask them the meaning of some obscure passage, they answer that I am unprepared and unfitted for it, and that his mind is so far above mine, I can not grasp it. I look up into the faces of these worthy men, who mingle so much commiseration with so much calmness, and wonder at seeing their look no less vacant than my own.

TIMOTHEUS. You have acknowledged his eloquence, while you derided his philosophy and repudiated his morals.

LUCIAN. Certainly, there was never so much eloquence with so little animation. When he has heated his oven, he forgets to put the bread into it; instead of which, he throws in another bundle of faggots. His words and sentences are often too large for the place they occupy. If a water-melon is not to be placed in an oyster-

shell, neither is a grain of millet in a golden salver. At high festivals a full band may enter; ordinary conversation goes on better without it.

TIMOTHEUS. There is something so spiritual about him, that many of us Christians are firmly of opinion he must have been partially enlightened from above.

LUCIAN. I hope and believe we all are. His entire works are in our library: do me the favour to point out to me a few of those passages where in poetry he approaches the spirit of Aristophanes, or where in morals he comes up to Epictetus.

TIMOTHEUS. It is useless to attempt it if you carry your prejudices with you. Beside, my dear cousin, I would not offend you, but really your mind had no point about it which could be brought to contact or affinity with Plato's.

LUCIAN. In the universality of his genius there must surely be some atom coincident with another in mine. You acknowledge, as everybody must do, that his wit is the heaviest and lowest: pray, is the specimen he has given us of history at all better?

TIMOTHEUS. I would rather look to the loftiness of his mind, and the genius that sustains him.

LUCIAN. So would I. Magnificent words, and the pomp and procession of stately sentences, may accompany genius, but are not always nor frequently called out by it. The voice ought not to be perpetually nor much elevated in the ethic and didactic, nor to roll sonorously, as if it issued from a mask in the theatre. The horses in the plain under Troy are not always kicking and neighing; nor is the dust always raised in whirlwinds on the banks of Simois and Scamander; nor are the rampires always in a blaze. Hector has lowered his helmet to the infant of Andromache, and Achilles to the embraces of Briseïs. I do not blame the prose-writer who opens his bosom occasionally to a breath of poetry; neither on the contrary can I praise the gait of that pedestrian who lifts up his legs as high on a bare heath as in a corn-field. Be authority as old and obstinate as it may, never let it persuade you that a man is the stronger for being unable to keep himself on the ground, or the weaker for breathing quietly and softly on ordinary occasions. Tell me over and over that you find every great quality in Plato: let me only once ask you in return, whether he ever is ardent and energetic, whether he wins the affections, whether he agitates the heart.

Finding him deficient in every one of these faculties, I think his disciples have extolled him too highly. Where power is absent, we may find the robes of genius, but we miss the throne. He would acquit a slave who killed another in self-defence, but if he killed any free man even in self-defence, he was not only to be punished with death, but to undergo the cruel death of a parricide. This effeminate philosopher was more severe than the manly Demosthenes, who quotes a law against the striking of a slave; and Diogenes, when one ran away from him, remarked that it would be horrible if Diogenes could not do without a slave, when a slave could do without Diogenes.

TIMOTHEUS. Surely the allegories of Plato are evidence of his genius.

LUCIAN. A great poet in the hours of his idleness may indulge in allegory: but the highest poetical character will never rest on so unsubstantial a foundation. The poet must take man from God's hands, must look into every fibre of his heart and brain, must be able to take the magnificent work to pieces, and to reconstruct it. When this labour is completed, let him throw himself composedly on the earth, and care little how many of its ephemeral insects creep over him. In regard to these allegories of Plato, about which I have heard so much, pray what and where are they? You hesitate, my fair cousin Timotheus! Employ one morning in transcribing them, and another in noting all the passages which are of practical utility in the commerce of social life, or purify our affections at home, or excite and elevate our enthusiam in the prosperity and glory of our country. Useful books, moral books, instructive books, are easily composed: and surely so great a writer should present them to us without blot or blemish: I find among his many volumes no copy of a similar composition. My enthusiasm is not easily raised indeed; yet such a whirlwind of a poet must carry it away with him; nevertheless, here I stand, calm and collected, not a hair of my beard in commotion. Declamation will find its echo in vacant places: it beats ineffectually on the well-furnished mind. Give me proof; bring the work; show the passages; convince, confound, overwhelm me.

TIMOTHEUS. I may do that another time with Plato. And yet, what effect can I hope to produce on an unhappy man who doubts even that the world is on the point of extinction?

LUCIAN AND TIMOTHEUS

LUCIAN. Are there many of your association who believe that this catastrophe is so near at hand?

TIMOTHEUS. We all believe it; or rather, we all are certain of it.

LUCIAN. How so? Have you observed any fracture in the disk of the sun? Are any of the stars loosened in their orbits? Has the beautiful light of Venus ceased to pant in the heavens, or has the belt of Orion lost its gems!

TIMOTHEUS. O for shame!

LUCIAN. Rather should I be ashamed of indifference on so important an occasion.

TIMOTHEUS. We know the fact by surer signs.

LUCIAN. These, if you could vouch for them, would be sure enough for me. The least of them would make me sweat as profusely as if I stood up to the neck in the hot preparation of a mummy. Surely no wise or benevolent philosopher could ever have uttered what he knew or believed might be distorted into any such interpretation. For if men are persuaded that they and their works are so soon about to perish, what provident care are they likely to take in the education and welfare of their families? What sciences will they improve, what learning will they cultivate, what monuments of past ages will they be studious to preserve, who are certain that there can be no future ones? Poetry will be censured as rank profaneness, eloquence will be converted into howls and execrations, statuary will exhibit only Midases and Ixions, and all the colours of painting will be mixed together to produce one grand conflagration: *flammantia mœnia mundi.*[1]

TIMOTHEUS. Do not quote an atheist; especially in Latin. I hate the language: the Romans are beginning to differ from us already.

LUCIAN. Ah! you will soon split into smaller fractions. But pardon me my unusual fault of quoting. Before I let fall a quotation I must be taken by surprise. I seldom do it in conversation, seldomer in composition; for it mars the beauty and unity of style, especially when it invades it from a foreign tongue. A quoter is either ostentatious of his acquirements or doubtful of his cause. And moreover, he never walks gracefully who leans upon the shoulder of another, however gracefully that other may walk.

[1] Luc., *De Nat.*, i. 74.

Herodotus, Plato, Aristoteles, Demosthenes, are no quoters. Thucydides, twice or thrice, inserts a few sentences of Pericles: but Thucydides is an emanation of Pericles, somewhat less clear indeed, being lower, although at no great distance from that purest and most pellucid source. The best of the Romans, I agree with you, are remote from such originals, if not in power of mind, or in acuteness of remark, or in sobriety of judgment, yet in the graces of composition. While I admired, with a species of awe such as not Homer himself ever impressed me with, the majesty and sanctimony of Livy, I have been informed by learned Romans that in the structure of his sentences he is often inharmonious, and sometimes uncouth. I can imagine such uncouthness in the Goddess of battles, confident of power and victory, when part of her hair is waving round the helmet, loosened by the rapidity of her descent or the vibration of her spear. Composition may be too adorned even for beauty. In painting it is often requisite to cover a bright colour with one less bright; and in language to relieve the ear from the tension of high notes, even at the cost of a discord. There are urns of which the borders are too prominent and too decorated for use, and which appear to be brought out chiefly for state, at grand carousals. The author who imitates the artificers of these, shall never have my custom.

TIMOTHEUS. I think you judge rightly: but I do not understand languages; I only understand religion.

LUCIAN. He must be a most accomplished, a most extraordinary man, who comprehends them both together. We do not even talk clearly when we are walking in the dark.

TIMOTHEUS. Thou art not merely walking in the dark, but fast asleep.

LUCIAN. And thou, my cousin, wouldst kindly awaken me with a red-hot poker. I have but a few paces to go along the corridor of life: prythee let me turn into my bed again and lie quiet. Never was any man less an enemy to religion than I am, whatever may be said to the contrary: and you shall judge of me by the soundness of my advice. If your leaders are in earnest, as many think, do persuade them to abstain from quarrelsomeness and contention, and not to declare it necessary that there should perpetually be a religious as well as a political war between east and west. No honest and considerate man will believe in their doctrines who,

inculcating peace and good-will, continue all the time to assail their fellow-citizens with the utmost rancour at every divergency of opinion, and, forbidding the indulgence of the kindlier affections, exercise at full stretch the fiercer. This is certain : if they obey any commander, they will never sound a charge when his order is to sound a retreat : if they acknowledge any magistrate, they will never tear down the tablet of his edicts.

TIMOTHEUS. We have what is all-sufficient.

LUCIAN. I see you have.

TIMOTHEUS. You have ridiculed all religion and all philosophy.

LUCIAN. I have found but little of either. I have cracked many a nut, and have come only to dust or maggots.

TIMOTHEUS. To say nothing of the saints, are all philosophers fools or impostors ? And, because you cannot rise to the ethereal heights of Plato, nor comprehend the real magnitude of a man so much above you, must he be a dwarf ?

LUCIAN. The best sight is not that which sees best in the dark or the twilight ; for no objects are then visible in their true colours and just proportions ; but it is that which presents to us things as they are, and indicates what is within our reach and what is beyond it. Never were any three writers, of high celebrity, so little understood in the main character, as Plato, Diogenes, and Epicurus. Plato is a perfect master of logic and rhetoric ; and whenever he errs in either, as I have proved to you he does occasionally, he errs through perverseness, not through unwariness. His language often settles into clear and most beautiful prose, often takes an imperfect and incoherent shape of poetry, and often, cloud against cloud, bursts with a vehement detonation in the air. Diogenes was hated both by the vulgar and the philosophers. By the philosophers, because he exposed their ignorance, ridiculed their jealousies, and rebuked their pride : by the vulgar, because they never can endure a man apparently of their own class who avoids their society and partakes in none of their humours, prejudices, and animosities. What right has he to be greater or better than they are ? he who wears older clothes, who eats staler fish, and possesses no vote to imprison or banish anybody. I am now ashamed that I mingled in the rabble, and that I could not resist the childish mischief of smoking him in his tub. He was the wisest man of his time, not excepting Aristoteles ; for he knew that he was greater than Philip

or Alexander. Aristoteles did not know that he himself was, or, knowing it, did not act up to his knowledge; and here is a deficiency of wisdom.

TIMOTHEUS. Whether you did or did not strike the cask, Diogenes would have closed his eyes equally. He would never have come forth and seen the truth, had it shone upon the world in that day. But, intractable as was this recluse, Epicurus I fear is quite as lamentable. What horrible doctrines!

LUCIAN. Enjoy, said he, the pleasant walks where you are; repose, and eat gratefully the fruit that falls into your bosom: do not weary your feet with an excursion, at the end whereof you will find no resting-place: reject not the odour of roses for the fumes of pitch and sulphur. What horrible doctrines!

TIMOTHEUS. Speak seriously. He was much too bad for ridicule.

LUCIAN. I will then speak as you desire me, seriously. His smile was so unaffected and so graceful, that I should have thought it very injudicious to set my laugh against it. No philosopher ever lived with such uniform purity, such abstinence from censoriousness, from controversy, from jealousy, and from arrogance.

TIMOTHEUS. Ah poor mortal! I pity him, as far as may be; he is in hell: it would be wicked to wish him out: we are not to murmur against the all-wise dispensations.

LUCIAN. I am sure he would not; and it is therefore I hope he is more comfortable than you believe.

TIMOTHEUS. Never have I defiled my fingers, and never will I defile them, by turning over his writings. But in regard to Plato, I can have no objection to take your advice.

LUCIAN. He will reward your assiduity: but he will assist you very little if you consult him principally (and eloquence for this should principally be consulted) to strengthen your humanity. Grandiloquent and sonorous, his lungs seem to play the better for the absence of the heart. His imagination is the most conspicuous, buoyed up by swelling billows over unsounded depths. There are his mild thunders, there are his glowing clouds, his traversing coruscations, and his shooting stars. More of true wisdom, more of trustworthy manliness, more of promptitude and power to keep you steady and straightforward on the perilous road of life, may be found in the little manual of Epictetus, which I could write in the palm of my left-hand, than there is in all the rolling

and redundant volumes of this mighty rhetorician, which you may begin to transcribe on the summit of the great Pyramid, carry down over the Sphynx at the bottom, and continue on the sands half-way to Memphis. And indeed the materials are appropriate; one part being far above our sight, and the other on what, by the most befitting epithet, Homer calls the *no-corn-bearing*.

TIMOTHEUS. There are many who will stand against you on this ground.

LUCIAN. With what perfect ease and fluency do some of the dullest men in existence toss over and discuss the most elaborate of all works! How many myriads of such creatures would be insufficient to furnish intellect enough for any single paragraph in them! Yet "*we think this*," "*we advise that*," are expressions now become so customary, that it would be difficult to turn them into ridicule. We must pull the creatures out while they are in the very act, and show who and what they are. One of these fellows said to Caius Fuscus in my hearing, that there was a time when it was permitted him to doubt occasionally on particular points of criticism, but that the time was now over.

TIMOTHEUS. And what did you think of such arrogance? What did you reply to such impertinence?

LUCIAN. Let me answer one question at a time. First: I thought him a legitimate fool, of the purest breed. Secondly: I promised him I would always be contented with the judgment he had rejected, leaving him and his friends in the enjoyment of the rest.

TIMOTHEUS. And what said he?

LUCIAN. I forget. He seemed pleased at my acknowledgment of his discrimination, at my deference and delicacy. He wished, however, I had studied Plato, Xenophon, and Cicero, more attentively; without which preparatory discipline, no two persons could be introduced advantageously into a dialogue. I agreed with him on this position, remarking that we ourselves were at that very time giving our sentence on the fact. He suggested a slight mistake on my side, and expressed a wish that he were conversing with a writer able to sustain the opposite part. With his experience and skill in rhetoric, his long habitude of composition, his knowledge of life, of morals, and of character, he should be less verbose than

Cicero, less gorgeous than Plato, and less trimly attired than Xenophon.

TIMOTHEUS. If he spoke in that manner, he might indeed be ridiculed for conceitedness and presumption, but his language is not altogether a fool's.

LUCIAN. I deliver his sentiments, not his words: for who would read, or who would listen to me, if such fell from me as from him? Poetry has its probabilities, so has prose: when people cry out against the representation of a dullard, *Could he have spoken all that?* "Certainly no," is the reply: neither did Priam implore, in harmonious verse, the pity of Achilles. We say only what might be said, when great postulates are conceded.

TIMOTHEUS. We will pretermit these absurd and silly men: but, cousin Lucian! cousin Lucian! the name of Plato will be durable as that of Sesostris.

LUCIAN. So will the pebbles and bricks which gangs of slaves erected into a pyramid. I do not hold Sesostris in much higher estimation than those quieter lumps of matter. They, O Timotheus, who survive the wreck of ages, are by no means, as a body, the worthiest of our admiration. It is in these wrecks, as in those at sea, the best things are not always saved. Hen-coops and empty barrels bob upon the surface, under a serene and smiling sky, when the graven or depicted images of the Gods are scattered on invisible rocks, and when those who most resembled them in knowledge and beneficence are devoured by cold monsters below.

TIMOTHEUS. You now talk reasonably, seriously, almost religiously. Do you ever pray?

LUCIAN. I do. It was no longer than five years ago that I was deprived by death of my dog Melanops. He had uniformly led an innocent life; for I never would let him walk out with me, lest he should bring home in his mouth the remnant of some God or other, and at last get bitten or stung by one. I reminded Anubis of this: and moreover I told him, what he ought to be aware of, that Melanops did honour to his relationship.

TIMOTHEUS. I can not ever call it piety to pray for dumb and dead beasts.

LUCIAN. Timotheus! Timotheus! have you no heart? have you no dog? do you always pray only for yourself?

TIMOTHEUS. We do not believe that dogs can live again.

LUCIAN. More shame for you! If they enjoy and suffer, if they hope and fear, if calamities and wrongs befall them such as agitate their hearts and excite their apprehensions; if they possess the option of being grateful or malicious, and choose the worthier: if they exercise the same sound judgment on many other occasions, some for their own benefit and some for the benefit of their masters; they have as good a chance of a future life, and a better chance of a happy one, than half the priests of all the religions in the world. Wherever there is the choice of doing well or ill, and that choice (often against a first impulse) decides for well, there must not only be a soul of the same nature as man's, although of less compass and comprehension, but, being of the same nature, the same immortality must appertain to it; for spirit, like body, may change, but can not be annihilated.

It was among the prejudices of former times that pigs are uncleanly animals, and fond of wallowing in the mire for mire's sake. Philosophy has now discovered, that when they roll in mud and ordure, it is only from an excessive love of cleanliness, and a vehement desire to rid themselves of scabs and vermin. Unfortunately doubts keep pace with discoveries. They are like warts, of which the blood that springs from a great one extirpated, makes twenty little ones.

TIMOTHEUS. The Hydra would be a more noble simile.

LUCIAN. I was indeed about to illustrate my position by the old Hydra, so ready at hand and so tractable; but I will never take hold of a hydra, when a wart will serve my turn.

TIMOTHEUS. Continue then.

LUCIAN. Even children are now taught, in despite of Æsop, that animals never spoke. The uttermost that can be advanced with any show of confidence is, that if they spoke at all, they spoke in unknown tongues. Supposing the fact, is this a reason why they should not be respected? Quite the contrary. If the tongues were unknown, it tends to demonstrate *our* ignorance, not *theirs*. If we could not understand them, while they possessed the gift, here is no proof that they did not speak to the purpose, but only that it was not to our purpose: which may likewise be said with equal certainty of the wisest men that ever existed. How little have we learnt from them, for the conduct of life or the avoidance of calamity! Unknown tongues indeed! yes, so are all tongues to the vulgar and the negligent.

TIMOTHEUS. It comforts me to hear you talk in this manner, without a glance at our gifts and privileges.

LUCIAN. I am less incredulous than you suppose, my cousin! Indeed I have been giving you what ought to be a sufficient proof of it.

TIMOTHEUS. You have spoken at last with becoming gravity, I must confess.

LUCIAN. Let me then submit to your judgment some fragments of history which have lately fallen into my hands. There is among them a *Hymn*, of which the metre is so incondite, and the phraseology so ancient, that the grammarians have attributed it to Linus. But the Hymn will interest you less, and is less to our purpose, than the tradition; by which it appears that certain priests of high antiquity were of the brute creation.

TIMOTHEUS. No better, any of them.

LUCIAN. Now you have polished the palms of your hands, I will commence my narrative from the manuscript.

TIMOTHEUS. Pray do.

LUCIAN. There existed in the city of Nephosis a fraternity of priests, reverenced by the appellation of *Gasteres*. It is reported that they were not always of their present form, but were birds, aquatic and migratory, a species of cormorant. The poet Linus, who lived nearer the transformation (if there indeed was any), sings thus, in his Hymn to Zeus.

"Thy power is manifest, O Zeus! in the Gasteres. Wild birds were they, strong of talon, clanging of wing, and clamorous of gullet. Wild birds, O Zeus! wild birds; now cropping the tender grass by the river of Adonis, and breaking the nascent reed at the root, and depasturing the sweet nymphæa; now again picking up serpents and other creeping things on each hand of old Ægyptos, whose head is hidden in the clouds.

"O that Mnemosyne would command the staidest of her three daughters to stand and sing before me! to sing clearly and strongly. How before thy throne, Saturnian! sharp voices arose, even the voices of Heré and of thy children. How they cried out that innumerable mortal men, various-tongued, kid-roasters in tent and tabernacle, devising in their many-turning hearts and thoughtful minds how to fabricate well-rounded spits of beech-tree, how such men, having been changed into brute animals, it behoved thee to

trim the balance, and in thy wisdom to change sundry brute animals into men; in order that they might pour out flame-coloured wine unto thee, and sprinkle the white flower of the sea upon the thighs of many bulls, to pleasure thee. Then didst thou, O storm-driver! overshadow far lands with thy dark eyebrows, looking down on them, to accomplish thy will. And then didst thou behold the Gasteres, fat, tall, prominent-crested, purple-legged, dædal-plumed, white and black, changeable in colour as Iris. And lo! thou didst will it, and they were men."

TIMOTHEUS. No doubt whatever can be entertained of this Hymn's antiquity. But what farther says the historian?

LUCIAN. I will read on, to gratify you.

"It is recorded that this ancient order of a most lordly priesthood went through many changes of customs and ceremonies, which indeed they were always ready to accommodate to the maintenance of their authority and the enjoyment of their riches. It is recorded that, in the beginning, they kept various tame animals, and some wild ones, within the precincts of the temple: nevertheless, after a time, they applied to their own uses everything they could lay their hands on, whatever might have been the vow of those who came forward with the offering. And when it was expected of them to make sacrifices, they not only would make none, but declared it an act of impiety to expect it. Some of the people, who feared the immortals, were dismayed and indignant at this backwardness; and the discontent at last grew universal. Whereupon, the two chief priests held a long conference together, and agreed that something must be done to pacify the multitude. But it was not until the greater of them, acknowledging his despondency, called on the Gods to answer for him that his grief was only because he never could abide bad precedents: and the other, on his side, protested that he was over-ruled by his superior, and moreover had a serious objection (founded on principle) to be knocked on the head. Meanwhile the elder was looking down on the folds of his robe, in deep melancholy. After long consideration, he sprang upon his feet, pushing his chair behind him, and said, 'Well; it is grown old, and was always too long for me: I am resolved to cut off a finger's breadth.'

"'Having, in your wisdom and piety, well contemplated the bad precedent,' said the other, with much consternation in his

countenance at seeing so elastic a spring in a heel by no means bearing any resemblance to a stag's—— 'I have, I have,' replied the other, interrupting him; 'say no more; I am sick at heart; you must do the same.'

"'A cursed dog has torn a hole in mine,' answered the other, 'and, if I cut anywhere about it, I only make bad worse. In regard to its length, I wish it were as long again.' 'Brother! brother! never be worldly-minded,' said the senior. 'Follow my example: snip off it, not a finger's breadth, half a finger's breadth.'

"'But,' expostulated the other, 'will that satisfy the Gods?' 'Who talked about them?' placidly said the senior. 'It is very unbecoming to have them always in our mouths: surely there are appointed times for them. Let us be contented with laying the snippings on the altar, and thus showing the people our piety and condescension. They, and the Gods also, will be just as well satisfied, as if we offered up a buttock of beef, with a bushel of salt, and the same quantity of wheaten flour on it.'

"'Well, if that will do—and you know best,' replied the other, 'so be it.' Saying which words, he carefully and considerately snipped off as much in proportion (for he was shorter by an inch) as the elder had done, yet leaving on his shoulders quite enough of materials to make handsome cloaks for seven or eight stout-built generals. Away they both went, arm-in-arm, and then holding up their skirts a great deal higher than was necessary, told the Gods what they two had been doing for them and their glory. About the court of the temple the sacred swine were lying in indolent composure: seeing which, the brotherly twain began to commune with themselves afresh: and the senior said repentantly, 'What fools we have been! The populace will laugh outright at the curtailment of our vestures, but would gladly have seen these animals eat daily a quarter less of the lentils.' The words were spoken so earnestly and emphatically that they were overheard by the quadrupeds. Suddenly there was a rising of all the principal ones in the sacred inclosure: and many that were in the streets took up, each according to his temperament and condition, the gravest or shrillest tone of reprobation. The thinner and therefore the more desperate of the creatures, pushing their snouts under the curtailed habiliments of the priests, assailed them with ridicule and reproach. For it had pleased the Gods to work a miracle in their behoof, and they became

as loquacious as those who governed them, and who were appointed to speak in the high places. 'Let the worst come to the worst, we at least have our tails to our hams,' said they. 'For how long?' whined others piteously: others incessantly ejaculated tremendous imprecations: others, more serious and sedate, groaned inwardly; and, although under their hearts there lay a huge mass of indigestible sourness ready to rise up against the chief priests, they ventured no farther than expostulation. 'We shall lose our voices,' said they, 'if we lose our complement of lentils; and then, most reverend lords, what will ye do for choristers?' Finally, one of grand dimensions, who seemed almost half-human, imposed silence on every debater. He lay stretched out apart from his brethren, covering with his side the greater portion of a noble dunghill, and all its verdure, native and imported. He crashed a few measures of peas-cods to cool his tusks; then turned his pleasurable longitudinal eyes far toward the outer extremities of their sockets; and leered fixedly and sarcastically at the high priests, showing every tooth in each jaw. Other men might have feared them; the high priests envied them, seeing what order they were in, and what exploits they were capable of. A great painter, who flourished many olympiads ago, has, in his volume entitled the *Canon*, defined the line of beauty! It was here in its perfection: it followed with winning obsequiousness every member, but delighted more especially to swim along that placid and pliant curvature on which Nature had ranged the implements of mastication. Pawing with his cloven hoof, he suddenly changed his countenance from the contemplative to the wrathful. At one effort he rose up to his whole length, breadth, and height: and they who had never seen him in earnest, nor separate from the common swine of the inclosure, with which he was in the habit of husking what was thrown to him, could form no idea what a prodigious beast he was. Terrible were the expressions of choler and comminations which burst forth from his fulminating tusks. Erimanthus would have hidden his puny offspring before them; and Hercules would have paused at the encounter. Thrice he called aloud to the high priests: thrice he swore in their own sacred language that they were a couple of thieves and impostors: thrice he imprecated the worst maledictions on his own head if they had not violated the holiest of their vows, and were not ready even to sell their Gods. A tremor ran throughout the

whole body of the united swine; so awful was the adjuration! Even the Gasteres themselves in some sort shuddered, not perhaps altogether, at the solemn tone of its impiety; for they had much experience in these matters. But among them was a Gaster who was calmer than the swearer, and more prudent and conciliating than those he swore against. Hearing this objurgation, he went blandly up to the sacred porker, and, lifting the flap of his right ear between forefinger and thumb with all delicacy and gentleness, thus whispered into it: 'You do not in your heart believe that any of us are such fools as to sell our Gods, at least while we have such a reserve to fall back upon.'

"'Are we to be devoured?' cried the noble porker, twitching his ear indignantly from under the hand of the monitor. 'Hush!' said he, laying it again most soothingly rather farther from the tusks: 'hush! sweet friend! Devoured? O certainly not: that is to say, not *all*: or, if all, not all at once. Indeed the holy men my brethren may perhaps be contented with taking a little blood from each of you, entirely for the advantage of your health and activity, and merely to compose a few slender black-puddings for the inferior monsters of the temple, who latterly are grown very exacting, and either are, or pretend to be, hungry after they have eaten a whole handful of acorns, swallowing I am ashamed to say what a quantity of water to wash them down. We do not grudge them it, as they well know: but they appear to have forgotten how recently no inconsiderable portion of this bounty has been conferred. If we, as they object to us, eat more, they ought to be aware that it is by no means for our gratification, since we have abjured it before the Gods, but to maintain the dignity of the priesthood, and to exhibit the beauty and utility of subordination.'

"The noble porker had beaten time with his muscular tail at many of these periods; but again his heart panted visibly, and he could bear no more.

"'All this for our good! for our activity! for our health! Let us alone: we have health enough; we want no activity. Let us alone, I say again, or by the immortals——!' 'Peace, my son! Your breath is valuable: evidently you have but little to spare: and what mortal knows how soon the Gods may demand the last of it?'

"At the beginning of this exhortation, the worthy high priest

had somewhat repressed the ebullient choler of his refractory and pertinacious disciple, by applying his flat soft palm to the signet-formed extremity of the snout.

"'We are ready to hear complaints at all times,' added he, 'and to redress any grievance at our own. But beyond a doubt, if you continue to raise your abominable outcries, some of the people are likely to hit upon two discoveries: first, that your lentils would be sufficient to make daily for every poor family a good wholesome porridge; and secondly, that your flesh, properly cured, might hang up nicely against the forthcoming bean-season.' Pondering these mighty words, the noble porker kept his eyes fixed upon him for some instants, then leaned forward dejectedly, then tucked one foot under him, then another, cautious to descend with dignity. At last he grunted (it must for ever be ambiguous whether with despondency or with resignation), pushed his wedgy snout far within the straw subjacent, and sank into that repose which is granted to the just."

TIMOTHEUS. Cousin! there are glimmerings of truth and wisdom in sundry parts of this discourse, not unlike little broken shells entangled in dark masses of sea-weed. But I would rather you had continued to adduce fresh arguments to demonstrate the beneficence of the Deity, proving (if you could) that our horses and dogs, faithful servants and companions to us, and often treated cruelly, may recognise us hereafter, and we them. We have no authority for any such belief.

LUCIAN. We have authority for thinking and doing whatever is humane. Speaking of humanity, it now occurs to me, I have heard a report that some well-intentioned men of your religion so interpret the words or wishes of its founder, they would abolish slavery throughout the empire.

TIMOTHEUS. Such deductions have been drawn indeed from our Master's doctrine: but the saner part of us receive it metaphorically, and would only set men free from the bonds of sin. For if domestic slaves were manumitted, we should neither have a dinner drest nor a bed made, unless by our own children: and as to labour in the fields, who would cultivate them in this hot climate? We must import slaves from Æthiopia and elsewhere, wheresoever they can be procured: but the hardship lies not on them; it lies on us, and bears heavily; for we must first buy them with our money, and then

feed them; and not only must we maintain them while they are hale and hearty and can serve us, but likewise in sickness and (unless we can sell them for a trifle) in decrepitude. Do not imagine, my cousin, that we are no better than enthusiasts, visionaries, subverters of order, and ready to roll society down into one flat surface.

LUCIAN. I thought you were maligned: I said so.

TIMOTHEUS. When the subject was discussed in our congregation, the meaner part of the people were much in favour of the abolition: but the chief priests and ministers absented themselves, and gave no vote at all, deeming it secular, and saying that in such matters the laws and customs of the country ought to be observed.

LUCIAN. Several of these chief priests and ministers are robed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day.

TIMOTHEUS. I have hopes of you now.

LUCIAN. Why so suddenly?

TIMOTHEUS. Because you have repeated those blessed words, which are only to be found in our scriptures.

LUCIAN. There indeed I found them. But I also found in the same volume words of the same speaker, declaring that the rich shall never see his face in heaven.

TIMOTHEUS. He does not always mean what you think he does.

LUCIAN. How is this? Did he then direct his discourse to none but men more intelligent than I am?

TIMOTHEUS. Unless he gave you understanding for the occasion, they might mislead you.

LUCIAN. Indeed!

TIMOTHEUS. Unquestionably. For instance, he tells us to take no heed of to-morrow: he tells us to share equally all our worldly goods: but we know that we can not be respected unless we bestow due care on our possessions, and that not only the vulgar but the well-educated esteem us in proportion to the gifts of fortune.

LUCIAN. The eclectic philosophy is most flourishing among you Christians. You take whatever suits your appetites, and reject the rest.

TIMOTHEUS. We are not half so rich as the priests of Isis. Give us their possessions; and we will not sit idle as they do, but be able and ready to do incalculable good to our fellow-creatures.

LUCIAN. I have never seen great possessions excite to great

alacrity. Usually they enfeeble the sympathies, and often overlie and smother them.

TIMOTHEUS. Our religion is founded less on sympathies than on miracles. Cousin! you smile most when you ought to be most serious.

LUCIAN. I was smiling at the thought of one whom I would recommend to your especial notice, as soon as you disinherit the priests of Isis. He may perhaps be refractory; for he pretends (the knave!) to work miracles.

TIMOTHEUS. Impostor! who is he?

LUCIAN. Aulus of Pelusium. Idle and dissolute, he never gained anything honestly but a scourging, if indeed he ever made, what he long merited, this acquisition. Unable to run into debt where he was known, he came over to Alexandria.

TIMOTHEUS. I know him: I know him well. Here, of his own accord, he has betaken himself to a new and regular life.

LUCIAN. He will presently wear it out, or make it sit easier on his shoulders. My metaphor brings me to my story. Having nothing to carry with him beside an empty valise, he resolved on filling it with somewhat, however worthless, lest, seeing his utter destitution, and hopeless of payment, a receiver of lodgers should refuse to admit him into the hostelry. Accordingly, he went to a tailor's, and began to joke about his poverty. Nothing is more apt to bring people into good humour: for, if they are poor themselves, they enjoy the pleasure of discovering that others are no better off; and, if not poor, there is the consciousness of superiority.

"The favour I am about to ask of a man so wealthy and so liberal as you are," said Aulus, "is extremely small: you can materially serve me, without the slightest loss, hazard, or inconvenience. In a few words my valise is empty: and to some ears an empty valise is louder and more discordant than a bagpipe: I cannot say I like the sound of it myself. Give me all the shreds and snippings you can spare me. They will feel like clothes; not exactly so to me and my person, but to those who are inquisitive, and who may be importunate."

The tailor laughed and distended both arms of Aulus with his munificence. Soon was the valise well filled and rammed down. Plenty of boys were in readiness to carry it to the boat. Aulus waved them off, looking at some angrily, at others suspiciously.

Boarding the skiff, he lowered his treasure with care and caution, staggering a little at the weight, and shaking it gently on deck, with his ear against it: and then, finding all safe and compact, he sate on it; but as tenderly as a pullet on her first eggs. When he was landed, his care was even greater, and whoever came near him was warned off with loud vociferations. Anxiously as the other passengers were invited by the innkeepers to give their houses the preference, Aulus was importuned most: the others were only beset; he was borne off in triumphant captivity. He ordered a bed-room, and carried his valise with him: he ordered a bath, and carried with him his valise. He started up from the company at dinner, struck his forehead, and cried out, "Where is my valise?" "We are honest men here," replied the host. "You have left it, sir, in your chamber: where else indeed should you leave it?"

"Honesty is seated on your brow," exclaimed Aulus: "but there are few to be trusted in the world we live in. I now believe I can eat." And he gave a sure token of the belief that was in him, not without a start now and then and a finger at his ear, as if he heard somebody walking in the direction of his bed-chamber. Now began his first miracle: for now he contrived to pick up, from time to time, a little money. In the presence of his host and fellow-lodgers, he threw a few obols, negligently and indifferently, among the beggars. "These poor creatures," said he, "know a new comer as well as the gnats do: in one half-hour I am half-ruined by them; and this daily."

Nearly a month had elapsed since his arrival, and no account of board and lodging had been delivered or called for. Suspicion at length arose in the host whether he really was rich. When another man's honesty is doubted, the doubter's is sometimes in jeopardy. The host was tempted to unsew the valise. To his amazement and horror he found only shreds within it. However, he was determined to be cautious, and to consult his wife, who, although a Christian like Aulus, and much edified by his discourses, might dissent from him in regard to a community of goods, at least in her own household, and might defy him to prove by any authority that the doctrine was meant for innkeepers. Aulus, on his return in the evening, found out that his valise had been opened. He hurried back, threw its contents into the canal, and, borrowing an old cloak, he tucked it up under his dress, and returned. Nobody

had seen him enter or come back again, nor was it immediately that his host or hostess were willing to appear. But, after he had called them loudly for some time, they entered his apartment: and he thus addressed the woman.

"O Eucharis! no words are requisite to convince you (firm as you are in the faith) of eternal verities, however mysterious. But your unhappy husband has betrayed his incredulity in regard to the most awful. If my prayers, offered up in our holy temples all day long, have been heard, and that they have been heard I feel within me the blessed certainty, something miraculous has been vouchsafed for the conversion of this miserable sinner. Until the present hour, the valise before you was filled with precious relics from the apparel of saints and martyrs, fresh as when on them." "True, by Jove!" said the husband to himself. "Within the present hour," continued Aulus, "they are united into one raiment, signifying our own union, our own restoration."

He drew forth the cloak, and fell on his face. Eucharis fell also, and kissed the saintly head prostrate before her. The host's eyes were opened, and he bewailed his hardness of heart. Aulus is now occupied in strengthening his faith, not without an occasional support to the wife's: all three live together in unity.

TIMOTHEUS. And do you make a joke even of this? Will you never cease from the habitude?

LUCIAN. Too soon. The farther we descend into the vale of years, the fewer illusions accompany us: we have little inclination, little time, for jocularity and laughter. Light things are easily detached from us, and we shake off heavier as we can. Instead of levity, we are liable to moroseness: for always near the grave there are more briars than flowers, unless we plant them ourselves, or our friends supply them.

TIMOTHEUS. Thinking thus, do you continue to dissemble or to distort the truth? The shreds are become a cable for the faithful. That they were miraculously turned into one entire garment who shall gainsay? How many hath it already clothed with righteousness? Happy men, casting their doubts away before it! Who knows, O cousin Lucian, but on some future day you yourself will invoke the merciful interposition of Aulus!

LUCIAN. Possibly: for if ever I fall among thieves, nobody is likelier to be at the head of them.

TIMOTHEUS. Uncharitable man! how suspicious! how ungenerous! how hardened in unbelief! Reason is a bladder on which you may paddle like a child as you swim in summer waters: but, when the winds rise and the waves roughen, it slips from under you, and you sink: yes, O Lucian, you sink into a gulf whence you never can emerge.

LUCIAN. I deem those the wisest who exert the soonest their own manly strength, now with the stream and now against it, enjoying the exercise in fine weather, venturing out in foul, if need be, yet avoiding not only rocks and whirlpools, but also shallows. In such a light, my cousin, I look on your dispensations. I shut them out as we shut out winds blowing from the desert; hot, debilitating, oppressive, laden with impalpable sands and pungent salts, and inflicting an incurable blindness.

TIMOTHEUS. Well, cousin Lucian! I can bear all you say while you are not witty. Let me bid you farewell in this happy interval.

LUCIAN. Is it not serious and sad, O my cousin, that what the Deity hath willed to lie incomprehensible in his mysteries, we should fall upon with tooth and nail, and ferociously growl over, or ignorantly dissect?

TIMOTHEUS. Ho! now you come to be serious and sad, there are hopes of you. Truth always begins or ends so.

LUCIAN. Undoubtedly. But I think it more reverential to abstain from that which, with whatever effort, I should never understand.

TIMOTHEUS. You are lukewarm, my cousin, you are lukewarm. A most dangerous state.

LUCIAN. For milk to continue in, not for men. I would not fain be frozen or scalded.

TIMOTHEUS. Alas! you are blind, my sweet cousin!

LUCIAN. Well; do not open my eyes with pincers, nor compose for them a collyrium of spurge.

May not men eat and drink and talk together, and perform in relation one to another all the duties of social life, whose opinions are different on things immediately under their eyes? If they can and do, surely they may as easily on things equally above the comprehension of each party. The wisest and most virtuous man in the whole extent of the Roman empire is Plutarch of Cheronæa: yet Plutarch holds a firm belief in the existence of I know not how many Gods, every one of whom has committed notorious mis-

demeanours. The nearest to the Cheronæan in virtue and wisdom is Trajan, who holds all the Gods dog-cheap. These two men are friends. If either of them were influenced by your religion, as inculcated and practised by the priesthood, he would be the enemy of the other, and wisdom and virtue would plead for the delinquent in vain. When your religion had existed, as you tell us, about a century, Caius Cæcilius,* of Novum Comum, was Proconsul in Bithynia. Trajan, the mildest and most equitable of mankind, desirous to remove from them, as far as might be, the hatred and invectives of those whose old religion was assailed by them, applied to Cæcilius for information on their behaviour as good citizens. The reply of Cæcilius was favourable.[1] Had Trajan applied to the most eminent and authoritative of the sect, they would certainly have brought into jeopardy all who differed in one tittle from any point of their doctrine or discipline. For the thorny and bitter aloe of dissension required less than a century to flower on the steps of your temple.

TIMOTHEUS. You are already half a Christian, in exposing to the world the vanities both of philosophy and of power.

LUCIAN. I have done no such thing : I have exposed the vanities of the philosophising and the powerful. Philosophy is admirable ; and Power may be glorious : the one conduces to truth, the other has nearly all the means of conferring peace and happiness, but it usually, and indeed almost always, takes a contrary direction. I have ridiculed the futility of speculative minds, only when they would pave the clouds instead of the streets. To see distant things better than near, is a certain proof of a defective sight. The people I have held in derision never turn their eyes to what they can see, but direct them continually where nothing is to be seen. And this, by their disciples, is called the sublimity of speculation ! There is little merit acquired, or force exhibited, in blowing off a feather that would settle on my nose : and this is all I have done in regard to the philosophers : but I claim for myself the approbation of humanity, in having shown the true dimensions of the great. The highest of them are no higher than my tunic ; but they are high

* The younger Pliny.—W. S. L.

[1] Pliny's attitude in fact was that they should never be proceeded against except for flagrant refusal to observe outward conformity. Landor's recollection of the matter is not quite correct. Trajan merely acquiesced in Pliny's policy.

enough to trample on the necks of those wretches who throw themselves on the ground before them.

TIMOTHEUS. Was Alexander of Macedon no higher?

LUCIAN. What region of the earth, what city, what theatre, what library, what private study, hath he enlightened? If you are silent, I may well be. It is neither my philosophy nor your religion which casts the blood and bones of men in their faces, and insists on the most reverence for those who have made the most unhappy. If the Romans scourged by the hands of children the schoolmaster who would have betrayed them, how greatly more deserving of flagellation, from the same quarter, are those hundreds of pedagogues who deliver up the intellects of youth to such immoral revellers and mad murderers! They would punish a thirsty child for purloining a bunch of grapes from a vineyard, and the same men on the same day would insist on his reverence for the subverter of Tyre, the plunderer of Babylon, and the incendiary of Persepolis. And are these men teachers? are these men philosophers? are these men priests? Of all the curses that ever afflicted the earth, I think Alexander was the worst. Never was he in so little mischief as when he was murdering his friends.

TIMOTHEUS. Yet he built this very city; a noble and opulent one when Rome was of hurdles and rushes.

LUCIAN. He built it? I wish, O Timotheus, he had been as well employed as the stone-cutters or the plasterers. No, no: the wisest of architects planned the most beautiful and commodious of cities, by which, under a rational government and equitable laws, Africa might have been civilised to the centre, and the palm have extended her conquests through the remotest desert. Instead of which, a dozen of Macedonian thieves rifled a dying drunkard and murdered his children. In process of time, another drunkard reeled hitherward from Rome, made an easy mistake in mistaking a palace for a brothel, permitted a stripling boy to beat him soundly, and a serpent to receive the last caresses of his paramour.

Shame upon historians and pedagogues for exciting the worst passions of youth by the display of such false glories! If your religion hath any truth or influence, her professors will extinguish the promontory lights, which only allure to breakers. They will be assiduous in teaching the young and ardent that great abilities do not constitute great men, without the right and unremitting

application of them; and that, in the sight of Humanity and Wisdom, it is better to erect one cottage than to demolish a hundred cities. Down to the present day we have been taught little else than falsehood. We have been told to do this thing and that: we have been told we shall be punished unless we do: but at the same time we are shown by the finger that prosperity and glory, and the esteem of all about us, rest upon other and very different foundations. Now, do the ears or the eyes seduce the most easily and lead the most directly to the heart? But both eyes and ears are won over, and alike are persuaded to corrupt us.

TIMOTHEUS. Cousin Lucian, I was leaving you with the strangest of all notions in my head. I began to think for a moment that you doubted my sincerity in the religion I profess; and that a man of your admirable good sense, and at your advanced age, could reject that only sustenance which supports us through the grave into eternal life.

LUCIAN. I am the most docile and practicable of men, and never reject what people set before me: for if it is bread, it is good for my own use; if bone or bran, it will do for my dog or mule. But, although you know my weakness and facility, it is unfair to expect I should have admitted at once what the followers and personal friends of your Master for a long time hesitated to receive. I remember to have read in one of the early commentators, that his disciples themselves * could not swallow the miracle of the loaves; and one who wrote more recently says, that even his brethren did not believe † in him.

TIMOTHEUS. Yet finally, when they have looked over each other's accounts, they cast them up, and make them all tally in the main sum; and if one omits an article, the next supplies its place with a commodity of the same value. What would you have? But it is of little use to argue on religion with a man who, professing his readiness to believe, and even his credulity, yet disbelieves in miracles.

LUCIAN. I should be obstinate and perverse if I disbelieved in the existence of a thing for no better reason than because I never saw it, and can not understand its operations. Do you believe, O Timotheus, that Perictione, the mother of Plato, became his mother by the sole agency of Apollo's divine spirit, under the phantasm of that god?

* Mark vi. † John vii.

TIMOTHEUS. I indeed believe such absurdities?

LUCIAN. You touch me on a vital part if you call an absurdity the religion or philosophy in which I was educated. Anaxalides, and Clearagus, and Speusippus, his own nephew, assert it. Who should know better than they?

TIMOTHEUS. Where are their proofs?

LUCIAN. I would not be so indelicate as to require them on such an occasion. A short time ago I conversed with an old centurion, who was in service by the side of Vespasian, when Titus, and many officers and soldiers of the army, and many captives, were present, and who saw one Eleazar[1] put a ring to the nostril of a demoniac (as the patient was called) and draw the demon out of it.

TIMOTHEUS. And do you pretend to believe this nonsense?

LUCIAN. I only believe that Vespasian and Titus had nothing to gain or accomplish by the miracle; and that Eleazar, if he had been detected in a trick by two acute men and several thousand enemies, had nothing to look forward to but a cross; the only piece of upholstery for which Judea seems to have either wood or workmen, and which are as common in that country as direction-posts are in any other.

TIMOTHEUS. The Jews are a stiff-necked people.

LUCIAN. On such occasions, no doubt.

TIMOTHEUS. Would you, O Lucian, be classed among the atheists, like Epicurus?

LUCIAN. It lies not at my discretion what name shall be given me at present or hereafter, any more than it did at my birth. But I wonder at the ignorance and precipitancy of those who call Epicurus an atheist. He saw on the same earth with himself a great variety of inferior creatures, some possessing more sensibility and more thoughtfulness than others. Analogy would lead so contemplative a reasoner to the conclusion, that if many were inferior and in sight, others might be superior and out of sight. He never disbelieved in the existence of the Gods; he only disbelieved that they troubled their heads with our concerns. Have they none of their own? If they are happy, does their happiness depend on us, comparatively so imbecile and vile? He believed, as nearly all nations do, in different ranks and orders of superhuman beings: and perhaps he thought (but I never was in his confidence or counsels) that the

[1] Josephus, viii. 11. 5.

higher were rather in communication with the next to them in intellectual faculties, than with the most remote. To me the suggestion appears by no means irrational, that, if we are managed or cared for at all, by beings wiser than ourselves (which in truth would be no sign of any great wisdom in them), it can only be by such as are very far from perfection, and who indulge us in the commission of innumerable faults and follies, for their own speculation or amusement.

TIMOTHEUS. There is only one such ; and he is the Devil.

LUCIAN. If he delights in our wickedness, which you believe, he must be incomparably the happiest of beings, which you do not believe. No God of Epicurus rests his elbow on his arm-chair with less energetic exertion or discomposure.

TIMOTHEUS. We lead holier and purer lives than such ignorant mortals as are not living under Grace.

LUCIAN. I also live under Grace, O Timotheus ! and I venerate her for the pleasures I have received at her hands. I do not believe she has quite deserted me. If my grey hairs are unattractive to her, and if the trace of her fingers is lost in the wrinkles of my forehead, still I sometimes am told it is discernible even on the latest and coldest of my writings.

TIMOTHEUS. You are wilful in misapprehension. The Grace of which I speak is adverse to pleasure and impurity.

LUCIAN. Rightly do you separate impurity and pleasure, which indeed soon fly asunder when the improvident would unite them. But never believe that tenderness of heart signifies corruption of morals, if you happen to find it (which indeed is unlikely) in the direction you have taken : on the contrary, no two qualities are oftener found together, on mind as on matter, than hardness and lubricity.

Believe me, cousin Timotheus, when we come to eighty years of age we are all Essenes. In our kingdom of heaven there is no marrying or giving in marriage ; and austerity in ourselves, when Nature holds over us the sharp instrument with which Jupiter operated on Saturn, makes us austere to others. But how happens it that you, both old and young, break every bond which connected you anciently with the Essenes ? Not only do you marry (a height of wisdom to which I never have attained, although in others I commend it), but you never share your substance with the poorest

of your community, as they did, nor live simply and frugally, nor refuse rank and offices in the state, nor abstain from litigation, nor abominate and execrate the wounds and cruelties of war. The Essenes did all this, and greatly more, if Josephus and Philo, whose political and religious tenets are opposite to theirs, are credible and trustworthy.

TIMOTHEUS. Doubtless you would also wish us to retire into the desert, and eschew the conversation of mankind.

LUCIAN. No indeed; but I would wish the greater part of your people to eschew mine, for they bring all the worst of the desert with them wherever they enter; its smothering heats, its blinding sands, its sweeping suffocation. Return to the pure spirit of the Essenes, without their asceticism; cease from controversy, and drop party designations. If you will not do this, do less, and be merely what you profess to be, which is quite enough for an honest, a virtuous, and a religious man.

TIMOTHEUS. Cousin Lucian, I did not come hither to receive a lecture from you.

LUCIAN. I have often given a dinner to a friend who did not come to dine with me.

TIMOTHEUS. Then, I trust, you gave him something better for dinner than bay-salt and dandelions. If you will not assist us in nettling our enemies a little for their absurdities and impositions, let me entreat you however to let us alone, and to make no remarks on us. I myself run into no extravagances, like the Essenes, washing and fasting, and roaming into solitude. I am not called to them: when I am, I go.

LUCIAN. I am apprehensive the Lord may afflict you with deafness in that ear.

TIMOTHEUS. Nevertheless, I am indifferent to the world, and all things in it. This, I trust, you will acknowledge to be true religion and true philosophy.

LUCIAN. That is not philosophy which betrays an indifference to those for whose benefit philosophy was designed; and those are the whole human race. But I hold it to be the most unphilosophical thing in the world, to call away men from useful occupations and mutual help, to profitless speculations and acrid controversies. Censurable enough, and contemptible too, is that supercilious philosopher, sneeringly sedate, who narrates in full and flowing

periods the persecutions and tortures of a fellow man, led astray by his credulity, and ready to die in the assertion of what in his soul he believes to be the truth. But hardly less censurable, hardly less contemptible, is the tranquilly arrogant sectarian, who denies that wisdom or honesty can exist beyond the limits of his own ill-lighted chamber.

TIMOTHEUS. What ! is he sanguinary ?

LUCIAN. Whenever he can be, he is : and he always has it in his power to be even worse than that : for he refuses his custom to the industrious and honest shopkeeper who has been taught to think differently from himself, in matters which he has had no leisure to study, and by which, if he had enjoyed that leisure, he would have been a less industrious and a less expert artificer.

TIMOTHEUS. We can not countenance those hard-hearted men who refuse to hear the word of the Lord.

LUCIAN. The hard-hearted knowing this of the tender-hearted, and receiving the declaration from their own lips, will refuse to hear the word of the Lord all their lives.

TIMOTHEUS. Well, well ; it can not be helped. I see, cousin, my hopes of obtaining a little of your assistance in your own pleasant way are disappointed : but it is something to have conceived a better hope of saving your soul, from your readiness to acknowledge your belief in miracles.

LUCIAN. Miracles have existed in all ages and in all religions. Witnesses to some of them have been numerous ; to others of them fewer. Occasionally the witnesses have been disinterested in the result.

TIMOTHEUS. Now indeed you speak truly and wisely.

LUCIAN. But sometimes the most honest and the most quiescent have either been unable or unwilling to push themselves so forward as to see clearly and distinctly the whole of the operation : and have listened to some knave who felt a pleasure in deluding their credulity, or some other who himself was either an enthusiast or a dupe. It also may have happened in the ancient religions, of Egypt for instance, or of India, or even of Greece, that narratives have been attributed to authors who never heard of them ; and have been circulated by honest men who firmly believed them ; by half-honest, who indulged their vanity in becoming members of a novel and bustling society ; and by utterly dishonest, who, having no

other means of rising above the shoulders of the vulgar, threw dust into their eyes and made them stoop.

TIMOTHEUS. Ha! the rogues! It is nearly all over with them.

LUCIAN. Let us hope so. Parthenius and the Roman poet Ovidius Naso have related the transformations of sundry men, women, and Gods.

TIMOTHEUS. Idleness! Idleness! I never read such lying authors.

LUCIAN. I myself have seen enough to incline me towards a belief in them.

TIMOTHEUS. You? Why! you have always been thought an utter infidel; and now you are running, hot and heedless as any mad dog, to the opposite extreme!

LUCIAN. I have lived to see, not indeed one man, but certainly one animal turned into another: nay, great numbers. I have seen sheep with the most placid faces in the morning, one nibbling the tender herb with all its dew upon it; another, negligent of its own sustenance, and giving it copiously to the tottering lamb aside it.

TIMOTHEUS. How pretty! half-poetical!

LUCIAN. In the heat of the day I saw the very same sheep tearing off each other's fleeces with long teeth and longer claws, and imitating so admirably the howl of wolves, that at last the wolves came down on them in a body, and lent their best assistance at the general devouring. What is more remarkable, the people of the villages seemed to enjoy the sport; and, instead of attacking the wolves, waited until they had filled their stomachs, ate the little that was left, said piously and from the bottom of their hearts what you call *grace*, and went home singing and piping.

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS OF GREEKS AND ROMANS

ROMAN

I. MARCELLUS AND HANNIBAL

208 B.C.

(*Imag. Convers.*, iii., 1828; *Wks.*, i., 1846; *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

Hannibal. Could a Numidian horseman ride no faster? Marcellus! ho! Marcellus! He moves not—he is dead. Did he not stir his fingers? Stand wide, soldiers—wide, forty paces—give him air—bring water—halt! Gather those broad leaves, and all the rest, growing under the brushwood—unbrace his armour. Loose the helmet first—his breast rises. I fancied his eyes were fixed on me—they have rolled back again. Who presumed to touch my shoulder? This horse? It was surely the horse of Marcellus! Let no man mount him. Ha! ha! the Romans too sink into luxury: here is gold about the charger.

Gaulish Chieftain. Execrable thief! The golden chain of our king under a beast's grinders! The vengeance of the Gods hath [1] overtaken the impure——

Hannibal. We will talk about vengeance when we have entered Rome, and about purity among the priests, if they will hear us. Sound [2] for the surgeon. That arrow may be extracted from the side, deep as it is.—The conqueror of Syracuse lies before me.[3]—Send a vessel off to Carthage. Say Hannibal is at the gates of Rome.—Marcellus, who stood alone between us, fallen. Brave

[1] 1st ed. reads: "has." [2] 1st ed. reads: "Send for"; but see list of errata.

[3] 1st ed. inserts: "The most formidable of my enemies is dead or dying. . . . Send," etc. The original punctuation throughout has the Landorian . . . instead of the dashes here used.

man! I would rejoice and can not.—How awfully serene a countenance! Such as we hear are in the islands of the Blessed. And how glorious a form and stature! Such too was theirs! They also once lay thus upon the earth wet with their blood—few other enter there. And what plain armour!

GAULISH CHIEFTAIN. My party slew him—indeed I think I slew him myself. I claim the chain: it belongs to my king[1]: the glory of Gaul requires it. Never will she endure to see another take it: rather[2] would she lose her last man. We swear! we swear!

HANNIBAL. My friend, the glory of Marcellus did not require him to wear it. When he suspended the arms of your brave king in the temple, he thought such a trinket unworthy of himself and of Jupiter. The shield he battered down, the breast-plate he pierced with his sword, these he showed to the people and to the Gods; hardly his wife and little children saw this, ere his horse wore it.

GAULISH CHIEFTAIN. Hear me, O Hannibal!

HANNIBAL. What! when Marcellus lies before me? when his life may perhaps be recalled? when I may lead him in triumph to Carthage? when Italy, Sicily, Greece, Asia, wait to obey me? Content thee! I will give thee mine own bridle, worth ten such.

GAULISH CHIEFTAIN. For myself?

HANNIBAL. For thyself.

GAULISH CHIEFTAIN. And these rubies and emeralds and that scarlet——

HANNIBAL. Yes, yes.

GAULISH CHIEFTAIN. O glorious Hannibal! unconquerable hero! O my happy country! to have such an ally and defender. I swear eternal gratitude—yes, gratitude, love, devotion, beyond eternity.

HANNIBAL. In all treaties we fix the time: I could hardly ask a longer. Go back to thy station.—I would see what the surgeon is about, and hear what he thinks. The life of Marcellus! the triumph of Hannibal! what else has the world in it? only Rome and Carthage: these follow.

[1] Veredomarus, defeated by Marcellus at Clastidium.
[2] From "rather" to "swear" added in 2nd ed.

SURGEON. Hardly an hour of life is left.

MARCELLUS. I must die then! The Gods be praised! The commander of a Roman army is no captive.[1]

HANNIBAL (*to the Surgeon*). Could not he bear a sea-voyage? Extract the arrow.

SURGEON. He expires that moment.

MARCELLUS. It pains me: extract it.

HANNIBAL. Marcellus, I see no expression of pain on your countenance, and never will I consent to hasten the death of an enemy in my power. Since your recovery is hopeless, you say truly you are no captive.

(*To the Surgeon.*) Is there nothing, man, that can assuage the mortal pain? for, suppress the signs of it as he may, he must feel it. Is there nothing to alleviate and allay it?

MARCELLUS. Hannibal, give me thy hand—thou hast found it and brought it me, compassion.

(*To the Surgeon.*) Go, friend; others want thy aid; several fell around me.

HANNIBAL. Recommend to your country, O Marcellus, while time permits it, reconciliation and peace with me, informing the Senate of my superiority in force, and the impossibility of resistance. The tablet is ready: let me take off this ring—try to write, to sign it at least. O! what satisfaction I feel at seeing you able to rest upon the elbow, and even to smile!

MARCELLUS. Within an hour or less, with how severe a brow would Minos say to me, "Marcellus, is this thy writing?"

Rome loses one man: she hath lost many such, and she still hath many left.

HANNIBAL. Afraid as you are of falsehood, say you this? I confess in shame the ferocity of my countrymen. Unfortunately too the nearer posts are occupied by Gauls, infinitely more cruel. The Numidians are so in revenge; the Gauls both in revenge and in sport. My presence is required at a distance, and I apprehend the barbarity of one or other, learning, as they must do, your refusal to execute my wishes for the common good, and feeling that by this refusal you deprive them of their country, after so long an absence.

[1] 1st ed. reads: "captive. SURGEON. Hardly an hour of life is left. HANNIBAL," etc.

MARCELLUS. Hannibal, thou art not dying.

HANNIBAL. What then? What mean you?

MARCELLUS. That thou mayest, and very justly, have many things yet to apprehend: I can have none. The barbarity of thy soldiers is nothing to me: mine would not dare be cruel. Hannibal is forced to be absent; and his authority goes away with his horse. On this turf lies defaced the semblance of a general; but Marcellus is yet the regulator of his army. Dost thou abdicate a power conferred on thee by thy nation? Or wouldst thou acknowledge it to have become, by thy own sole fault, less plenary than thy adversary's?

I have spoken too much: let me rest: this mantle oppresses me.

HANNIBAL. I placed my mantle on your head when the helmet was first removed, and while you were lying in the sun. Let me fold it under, and then replace the ring.

MARCELLUS. Take it, Hannibal. It was given me by a poor woman who flew to me at Syracuse, and who covered it with her hair, torn [1] off in desperation that she had no other gift to offer. Little thought I that her gift and her words should be mine. How suddenly may the most powerful be in the situation of the most helpless! Let that ring and the mantle under my head be the exchange of guests at parting. The time may come, Hannibal, when thou (and the Gods alone know whether as conqueror or conquered) mayest sit under the roof of my children, and in either case it shall serve thee. In thy adverse fortune, they will remember on whose pillow their father breathed his last; in thy prosperous (heaven grant it may shine upon thee in some other country) it will rejoice thee to protect [2] them. We feel ourselves the most exempt from affliction when we relieve it, although we are then the most conscious that it may befall us.

There is one thing here which is not at the disposal of either.

HANNIBAL. What?

MARCELLUS. This body.

HANNIBAL. Whither would you be lifted? Men are ready.

MARCELLUS. I meant not so. My strength is failing. I seem to hear rather what is within than what is without. My sight and my other senses are in confusion. I would have said, This body, when

[1] 1st ed. spells "torne"; as, earlier, "allie" for "ally."
[2] 1st ed. reads (for "protect"): "comfort and console."

a few bubbles of air shall have left it, is no more worthy of thy notice than of mine; but thy glory will not let thee refuse it to the piety of my family.

HANNIBAL. You would ask something else. I perceive an inquietude not visible till now.

MARCELLUS. Duty and Death make us think of home sometimes.

HANNIBAL. Thitherward the thoughts of the conqueror and of the conquered fly together.

MARCELLUS. Hast thou any prisoners from my escort?

HANNIBAL. A few dying lie about—and let them lie—they are Tuscans. The remainder I saw at a distance, flying, and but one brave man among them—he appeared a Roman—a youth who turned back, though wounded. They surrounded and dragged him away, spurring his horse with their swords. These Etrurians measure their courage carefully, and tack it well together before they put it on, but throw it off again with lordly ease.

Marcellus, why think about them? or does aught else disquiet your thoughts?

MARCELLUS. I have suppressed it long enough. My son—my beloved son!

HANNIBAL. Where is he? Can it be? Was he with you?

MARCELLUS. He would have shared my fate—and has not. Gods of my country! beneficent throughout life to me, in death surpassingly beneficent, I render you, for the last time, thanks.

II. P. SCIPIO ÆMILIANUS, POLYBIUS, PANÆTIUS

OUTSIDE CARTHAGE, 146 B.C.

(*Cambridge Philological Museum*, ii., 1833; *Ablett's Literary Hours*, 1837; *Wks.*, ii., 1846; *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

SCIPIO. Polybius, if you have found me slow in rising to you, if I lifted not up my eyes to salute you on your entrance, do not hold me ungrateful—proud there is no danger that you will ever call me: this day of all days would least make me so: it shows me the power of the immortal Gods, the mutability of fortune, the instability of empire, the feebleness, the nothingness of man. The earth stands motionless; the grass upon it bends and returns, the same to-day as yesterday, the same in this age as in a hundred past: the sky darkens and is serene again; the clouds melt away, but they are clouds another time, and float like triumphal pageants along the heavens. Carthage is fallen! to rise no more! the funereal horns have this hour announced to us, that, after eighteen days and eighteen nights of conflagration, her last embers are extinguished.

POLYBIUS. Perhaps, O Æmilianus, I ought not to have come in.

SCIPIO. Welcome, my friend.

POLYBIUS. While you were speaking I would by no means interrupt you so idly, as to ask you to whom you have been proud, or to whom could you be ungrateful.

SCIPIO. To him, if to any, whose hand is in [1] mine; to him on whose shoulder I rest my head, weary with presages and vigils. Collect my thoughts for me, O my friend! the fall of Carthage hath shaken and scattered them. There are moments when, if we are quite contented with ourselves, we never can remount to what we were before.

POLYBIUS. Panætius is absent.

SCIPIO. Feeling the necessity, at the moment, of utter loneliness, I despatched him toward the city. There may be (yes, even there)

[1] 1st ed. reads: "is on my heart; to," etc. (Also in 1837.)

some sufferings which the senate would not censure us for assuaging. But behold he returns ! [1] We were speaking of you, Panætius !

Panætius. And about what beside ? Come, honestly tell me, Polybius, on what are you reflecting and meditating with such sedately intense enthusiasm ?

Polybius. After the burning of some village, or the overleaping of some garden-wall, to exterminate a few pirates or highwaymen, I have seen the commander's tent thronged with officers ; I have heard as many trumpets around him as would have shaken down the places of themselves ; I have seen the horses start from the pretorium, as if they would fly from under their trappings, and spurred as if they were to reach the east and west before sunset, that nations might hear of the exploit, and sleep soundly. And now do I behold in solitude, almost in gloom, and in such silence that, unless my voice prevents it, the grasshopper is audible, him who has levelled to the earth the strongest and most populous of cities, the wealthiest and most formidable of empires. I had seen Rome ; I had seen (what those who never saw never *will* see) Carthage ; I thought I had seen Scipio : it was but the image of him : here I find him.

Scipio. There are many hearts that ache this day : there are many that never will ache more : hath one man done it ? one man's breath ? What air, upon the earth, or upon the waters, or in the void of heaven, is lost so quickly ! it flies away at the point of an arrow, and returns no more ! the sea-foam stifles it ! the tooth of a reptile stops it ! a noxious leaf suppresses it. What are we in our greatness ? whence rises it ? whither tends it ?

Merciful Gods ! may not Rome be what Carthage is ? may not those who love her devotedly, those who will look on her with fondness and affection after life,[2] see her in such condition as to wish she were so ?

Polybius. One of the heaviest groans over fallen Carthage, burst from the breast of Scipio : who would believe this tale ?

Scipio. Men like my Polybius : others must never hear it.

Polybius. You have not ridden forth, Æmilianus, to survey the ruins.

[1] 1st ed. reads : " returns. Come, tell me, Polybius, on what are you reflecting and meditating ? Polybius," etc. (Also in 1837.)

[2] Punctuation doubtful.

SCIPIO. No, Polybius: since I removed my tent to avoid the heat from the conflagration, I never have ridden nor walked nor looked toward them. At this elevation, and three miles off, the temperature of the season is altered. I do not believe, as those about me would have persuaded me, that the Gods were visible in the clouds; that thrones of ebony and gold were scattered in all directions; that broken chariots and flaming steeds, and brazen bridges, had cast their fragments upon the earth; that eagles and lions, dolphins and tridents, and other emblems of power and empire, were visible at one moment, and at the next had vanished; that purple and scarlet overspread the mansions of the Gods; that their voices were heard at first confusedly and discordantly; and that the apparition closed with their high festivals. I could not keep my eyes on the heavens: a crash of arch or of theatre or of tower, a column of flame rising higher than they were, or a universal cry, as if none until then had perished, drew them thitherward. Such were the dismal sights and sounds, a fresh city seemed to have been taken every hour, for seventeen days. This is the nineteenth since the smoke arose from the level roofs and from the lofty temples, and thousands died, and tens of thousands ran in search of death.

Calamity moves me; heroism moves me more. That a nation whose avarice we have so often reprehended, should have cast into the furnace gold and silver, from the insufficiency of brass and iron for arms; that palaces the most magnificent should have been demolished by the proprietor for their beams and rafters, in order to build a fleet against us; that the ropes whereby the slaves hauled them down to the new harbour, should in part be composed of hair, for one lock of which kings would have laid down their diadems; that Asdrubal should have found equals, his wife none—my mind, my very limbs, are unsteady with admiration.

O Liberty! what art thou to the valiant and brave, when thou art thus to the weak and timid! dearer than life, stronger than death, higher than purest love. Never will I call upon thee where thy name can be profaned, and never shall my soul acknowledge a more exalted Power than thee.

PANÆTIUS. The Carthaginians and Moors have, beyond other nations, a delicate feeling on female chastity. Rather than that their women should become slaves and concubines, they slay them:

is it certain that Asdrubal did not observe, or cause to be observed, the custom of his country?

POLYBIUS. Certain: on the surrender of his army his wife threw herself and her two infants into the flames. Not only memorable acts, of what the dastardly will call desperation, were performed, but some also of deliberate and signal justice. Avaricious as we called the people, and unjustly, as you have proved, Æmilianus, I will relate what I myself was witness to.

In a part of the city where the fire had subsided, we were excited by loud cries, rather of indignation, we thought, than of such as fear or lament or threaten or exhort; and we pressed forward to disperse the multitude. Our horses often plunged in the soft dust, and in the holes whence the pavement had been removed for missiles, and often reared up and snorted violently at smells which we could not perceive, but which we discovered to rise from bodies, mutilated and half-burnt, of soldiers and horses, laid bare, some partly, some wholly, by the march of the troop. Although the distance from the place whence we parted to that where we heard the cries was very short, yet from the incumbrances in that street, and from the dust and smoke issuing out of others, it was some time before we reached it. On our near approach, two old men threw themselves on the ground before us, and the elder spake thus. "Our age, O Romans, neither will nor ought to be our protection: we are, or rather we have been, judges of this land; and to the uttermost of our power we have invited our countrymen to resist you. The laws are now yours."

The expectation of the people was intense and silent: we had heard some groans; and now the last words of the old man were taken up by others, by men in agony.

"Yes, O Romans!" said the elder who accompanied him that had addressed us, "the laws are yours; and none punish more severely than you do treason and parricide. Let your horses turn this corner, and you will see before you traitors and parricides."

We entered a small square: it had been a market-place: the roofs of the stalls were demolished, and the stones of several columns (thrown down to extract the cramps of iron and the lead that fastened them) served for the spectators, male and female, to mount on. Five men were nailed on crosses; two others were nailed against a wall, from scarcity (as we were told) of wood.

"Can seven men have murdered their parents in the same year?" cried I.

"No, nor has any of the seven," replied the first who had spoken. "But when heavy impositions were laid upon those who were backward in voluntary contributions, these men, among the richest in our city, protested by the Gods that they had no gold or silver left. They protested truly."

"And they die for this! inhuman, insatiable, inexorable wretch!"

"Their books," added he, unmoved at my reproaches, "were seized by public authority and examined. It was discovered that, instead of employing their riches in external or internal commerce, or in manufactures, or in agriculture, instead of reserving it for the embellishment of the city, or the utility of the citizens, instead of lending it on interest to the industrious and the needy, they had lent it to foreign kings and tyrants, some of whom were waging unjust wars by these very means, and others were enslaving their own country. For so heinous a crime the laws had appointed no specific punishment. On such occasions the people and elders vote in what manner the delinquent shall be prosecuted, lest any offender should escape with impunity, from their humanity or improvidence. Some voted that these wretches should be cast amid the panthers; the majority decreed them (I think wisely) a more lingering and more ignominious death."

The men upon the crosses held down their heads, whether from shame or pain or feebleness. The sunbeams were striking them fiercely; sweat ran from them, liquefying the blood that had blackened and hardened on their hands and feet. A soldier stood by the side of each, lowering the point of his spear to the ground; but no one of them gave it up to us. A centurion asked the nearest of them how he dared to stand armed before him.

"Because the city is in ruins, and the laws still live," said he. "At the first order of the conqueror or the elders, I surrender my spear."

"What is your pleasure, O commander?" said the elder.

"That an act of justice be the last public act performed by the citizens of Carthage, and that the sufferings of these wretches be not abridged."

Such was my reply. The soldiers piled their spears, for the points

of which the hearts of the crucified men thirsted; and the people hailed us as they would have hailed deliverers.

Scipio. It is wonderful that a city, in which private men are so wealthy as to furnish the armouries of tyrants, should have existed so long, and flourishing in power and freedom.

Panætius. It survived but shortly this flagrant crime in its richer citizens. An admirable form of government, spacious and safe harbours, a fertile soil, a healthy climate, industry and science in agriculture, in which no nation is equal to the Moorish, were the causes of its prosperity: there are many of its decline.

Scipio. Enumerate them, Panætius, with your wonted clearness.

Panætius. We are fond, O my friends! of likening power and greatness to the luminaries of heaven; and we think ourselves quite moderate when we compare the agitations of elevated souls to whatever is highest and strongest on the earth, liable alike to shocks and sufferings, and able alike to survive and overcome them. And truly thus to reason, as if all things around and above us sympathized, is good both for heart and intellect. I have little or nothing of the poetical in my character; and yet from reading over and considering these similitudes, I am fain to look upon nations with somewhat of the same feeling; and, dropping from the mountains and disentangling myself from the woods and forests, to fancy I see in states what I have seen in corn-fields. The green blades rise up vigorously in an inclement season, and the wind itself makes them shine against the sun. There is room enough for all of them: none wounds another by collision or weakens by overtopping it; but, rising and bending simultaneously, they seem equally and mutually supported. No sooner do the ears of corn upon them lie close together in their full maturity, than a slight inundation is enough to cast them down, or a faint blast of wind to shed and scatter them. In Carthage we have seen the powerful families, however discordant among themselves, unite against the popular; and it was only when their lives were at stake that the people co-operated with the senate.

A mercantile democracy may govern long and widely; a mercantile aristocracy can not stand. What people will endure the supremacy of those, uneducated and presumptuous, from whom they buy their mats and faggots, and who receive their money for the most ordinary and vile utensils? If no conqueror enslaves them from abroad, they would, under such disgrace, welcome as

their deliverer, and acknowledge as their master, the citizen most distinguished for his military achievements. The rich men who were crucified in the weltering wilderness beneath us, would not have employed such criminal means of growing richer, had they never been persuaded to the contrary, and that enormous wealth would enable them to commit another and a more flagitious act of treason against their country, in raising them above the people, and enabling them to become its taxers and oppressors.

O Æmilianus! what a costly beacon here hath Rome before her in this awful conflagration: the greatest (I hope) ever to be, until that wherein the world must perish.

Polybius. How many Sibylline books are legible in yonder embers!

The causes, O Panætius, which you have stated, of Carthage's former most flourishing condition, are also those why a hostile senate hath seen the necessity of her destruction, necessary not only to the dominion, but to the security, of Rome. Italy has the fewest and the worst harbours of any country known to us: a third of her soil is sterile, a third of the remainder is pestiferous: and her inhabitants are more addicted to war and rapine than to industry and commerce. To make room for her few merchants on the Adriatic and Ionian seas, she burns Corinth: to leave no rival in traffic or in power, she burns Carthage.

Panætius. If the Carthaginians had extended their laws and language over the surrounding states of Africa, which they might have done by moderation and equity, this ruin could not have been effected. Rome has been victorious by having been the first to adopt a liberal policy, which even in war itself is a wise one. The parricides who lent their money to the petty tyrants of other countries, would have found it greatly more advantageous to employ it in cultivation nearer home, and in feeding those as husbandmen whom else they must fear as enemies. So little is the Carthaginian language known, that I doubt whether we shall in our lifetime see anyone translate their annals into Latin or Greek: and within these few days what treasures of antiquity have been irreparably lost! The Romans will repose at citrean * tables for ages, and never know at last perhaps whence the Carthaginians brought their wood.

* The *trabs citrea* is not *citron wood* as we understand the fruit tree. It was often of great dimensions: it appears from the description of its colour to have been mahogany. The trade to the Atlantic continent and islands must have

SCIPIO, POLYBIUS, AND PANÆTIUS

SCIPIO. It is an awful thing to close as we have done the history of a people. If the intelligence brought this morning to Polybius be true,* in one year the two most flourishing and most beautiful cities in the world have perished, in comparison with which our Rome presents but the pent-houses of artisans or the sheds of shepherds. With whatever celerity the messenger fled from Corinth and arrived here, the particulars must have been known at Rome as early, and I shall receive them ere many days are past.

PANÆTIUS. I hardly know whether we are not less affected at the occurrence of two or three momentous and terrible events, than at one; and whether the Gods do not usually place them together in the order of things, that we may be awe-stricken by the former, and reconciled to their decrees by the latter, from an impression of their power. I know not what Babylon may have been; but I presume that, as in the case of all other great Asiatic capitals, the habitations of the people (who are slaves) were wretched, and that the magnificence of the place consisted in the property of the king and priesthood, and in the walls erected for the defence of it. Many streets probably were hardly worth a little bronze cow of Myron, such as a stripling could steal and carry off. The case of Corinth and of Carthage was very different. Wealth overspread the greater part of them, competence and content the whole. Wherever there are despotical governments, poverty and industry dwell together; Shame dogs them in the public walks; Humiliation is among their household gods.

SCIPIO. I do not remember the overthrow of any two other great cities within so short an interval.

PANÆTIUS. I was not thinking so much of cities or their inhabitants, when I began to speak of what a breath of the Gods removes at once from earth. I was recollecting, O Æmilianus, that in one Olympiad the three greatest men that ever appeared together were swept off. What is Babylon, or Corinth, or Carthage, in comparison with these! what would their destruction be, if every hair on the head of every inhabitant had become a man, such as most men are!

been possessed by a company, bound to secrecy by oath and interest. The prodigious price of this wood at Rome proves that it had ceased to be imported, or perhaps found, in the time of Cicero.—W. S. L.

* Corinth in fact was not burnt until some months after Carthage; but as one success is always followed by the rumour of another, the relation is not improbable.—W. S. L.

First in order of removal was he whose steps you have followed, and whose labours you have completed, Africanus: then Philopœmen, whose task was more difficult, more complex, more perfect: and lastly Hannibal. What he was you know better than any.

Scipio. Had he been supported by his country, had only his losses been filled up, and skilful engineers sent out to him with machinery and implements for sieges, we should not be discoursing here on what he was: the Roman name had been extinguished.

Polybius. Since Æmilianus is as unwilling to blame an enemy as a friend, I take it on myself to censure Hannibal for two things, subject however to the decision of him who has conquered Carthage.

Scipio. The first I anticipate: now what is the second?

Panætius. I would hear both stated and discoursed on, although the knowledge will be of little use to me.

Polybius. I condemn, as everyone does, his inaction after the battle of Cannæ; and, in his last engagement with Africanus, I condemn no less his bringing into the front of the centre, as became some showy tetrarch rather than Hannibal, his eighty elephants, by the refractoriness of which he lost the battle.[1]

Scipio. What would you have done with them, Polybius?

Polybius. Scipio, I think it unwise and unmilitary to employ any force on which we can by no means calculate.

Scipio. Gravely said and worthy of Polybius. In the first book of your history, which leaves me no other wish or desire than that you should continue as you begin it, we have, in three different engagements, three different effects produced by the employment of elephants. The first, when our soldiers in Sicily, under Lucius Postumius and Quinctus Mamilius, drove the Carthaginians into Heraclea; in which battle the advanced guard of the enemy, being repulsed, propelled these animals before it upon the main body of the army, causing an irreparable disaster; the second, in the ill-conducted engagement of Atilius Regulus, who, fearing the shock of them, condensed his centre, and was outflanked. He should have opened the lines to them and have suffered them to pass through, as the enemy's cavalry was in the wings, and the infantry not enough in advance to profit by such an evolution. The third was evinced at Panormus, when Metellus gave orders to the light-armed troops to harass them and retreat into the trenches, from which, wounded

[1] Polybius on the battle of Zama. Pol., xv., 12.

and confounded, and finding no way open, they rushed back (as many as could) against the Carthaginian army, and accelerated its discomfiture.

POLYBIUS. If I had employed the elephants at all, it should rather have been in the rear or on the flank; and even there not at the beginning of the engagement, unless I knew that the horses or the soldiers were unused to encounter them. Hannibal must have well remembered (being equally great in memory and invention) that the Romans had been accustomed to them in the war with Pyrrhus, and must have expected more service from them against the barbarians of the two Gauls, against the Insubres and Taurini, than against our legions. He knew that the Romans had on more than one occasion made them detrimental to their masters. Having with him a large body of troops collected by force from various nations, and kept together with difficulty, he should have placed the elephants where they would have been a terror to these soldiers, not without a threat that they were to trample down such of them as attempted to fly or declined to fight.

SCIPIO. Now, what think you, Panætius?

PANÆTIUS. It is well, O Æmilianus, when soldiers would be philosophers; but it is ill when philosophers would be soldiers. Do you and Polybius agree on the point? if you do, the question need be asked of none other.

SCIPIO. Truly, O Panætius, I would rather hear the thing from him than that Hannibal should have heard it: for a wise man will say many things which even a wiser man may not have thought of. Let me tell you both however, what Polybius may perhaps know already, that combustibles were placed by Africanus both in flank and rear, at equal distances, with archers from among the light horsemen, whose arrows had liquid fire attached to them, and whose movements would have irritated, distracted, and wearied down the elephants, even if the wounds and scorchings had been ineffectual. But come, Polybius, you must talk now as others talk; we all do sometimes.

POLYBIUS. I am the last to admit the authority of the vulgar; but here we all meet and unite. Without asserting or believing that the general opinion is of any weight against a captain like Hannibal; agreeing on the contrary with Panætius, and firmly persuaded that myriads of little men can no more compensate a

great one than they can make him; you will listen to me if I adduce the authority of Lælius.

SCIPIO. Great authority! and perhaps, as living and conversing with those who remembered the action of Cannæ, preferable even to your own.

POLYBIUS. It was his opinion that, from the consternation of Rome, the city might have been taken.

SCIPIO. It suited not the wisdom or the experience of Hannibal to rely on the consternation of the Roman people. I too, that we may be on equal terms, have some authority to bring forward. The son of Africanus, he who adopted me into the family of the Scipios, was, as you both remember, a man of delicate health and sedentary habits, learned, elegant, and retired. He related to me, as having heard it from his father, that Hannibal after the battle sent home the rings of the Roman knights, and said in his letter, "If you will instantly give me a soldier for each ring, together with such machines as are already in the arsenal, I will replace them surmounted by the statue of Capitoline Jupiter, and our supplications to the Gods of our country shall be made along the streets and in the temples, on the robes of the Roman senate." Could he doubt of so moderate a supply? he waited for it in vain.

And now I will relate to you another thing, which I am persuaded you will accept as a sufficient reason of itself why Hannibal did not besiege our city after the battle of Cannæ. His own loss was so severe, that, in his whole army, he could not muster ten thousand men.*

But, my friends, as I am certain that neither of you will ever think me invidious, and as the greatness of Hannibal does not diminish the reputation of Africanus, but augment it, I will venture to remark that he had little skill or practice in sieges; that, after the battle of Thrasymene, he attacked (you remember) Spoletum unsuccessfully; and that, a short time before the unhappy day at Cannæ, a much smaller town than Spoletum had resisted and repulsed him. Perhaps he rejoiced in his heart that he was not supplied with materials requisite for the capture of strong places; since in Rome, he well knew, he would have found a body of men, partly citizens who had formerly borne arms, partly the wealthier

* Plutarch says, and undoubtedly upon some ancient authority, that *both* armies did not contain that number.—W. S. L.

of our allies who had taken refuge there, together with their slaves and clients, exceeding his army in number, not inferior in valour, compensating the want of generalship by the advantage of position and by the desperation of their fortunes, and possessing the abundant means of a vigorous and long defence. Unnecessary is it to speak of its duration. When a garrison can hold our city six months, or even less, the besieger must retire. Such is the humidity of the air in its vicinity, that the Carthaginians, who enjoyed here at home a very dry and salubrious climate, would have perished utterly. The Gauls, I imagine, left us unconquered on a former occasion from the same necessity. Beside, they are impatient of inaction, and would have been most so under a general to whom, without any cause in common, they were but hired auxiliaries. None in any age hath performed such wonderful exploits as Hannibal; and we ought not to censure him for deficiency in an art which we ourselves have acquired but lately. Is there, Polybius, any proof or record that Alexander of Macedon was master of it?

Polybius. I have found none. We know that he exposed his person, and had nearly lost his life, by leaping from the walls of a city; which a commander-in-chief ought never to do, unless he would rather hear the *huzzas* of children, than the approbation of military men, or any men of discretion or sense. Alexander was without an excuse for his temerity, since he was attended by the generals who had taken Thebes, and who therefore, he might well know, would take the weaker and less bravely defended towns of Asia.

Scipio. Here again you must observe the superiority of Hannibal. He was accompanied by no general of extraordinary talents, resolute as were many of them, and indeed all. His irruption into and through Gaul, with so inconsiderable a force; his formation of allies out of enemies, in so brief a space of time; and then his holding them together so long; are such miracles, that, cutting through eternal snows, and marching through paths which seem to us suspended loosely and hardly poised in the heavens, are less. And these too were his device and work. Drawing of parallels, captain against captain, is the occupation of a trifling and scholastic mind, and seldom is commenced, and never conducted, impartially. Yet, my friends, who of these idlers in parallelograms is so idle, as to compare the invasion of Persia with the invasion of Gaul, the Alps,

and Italy; Moors and Carthaginians with Macedonians and Greeks; Darius and his hordes and satraps with Roman legions under Roman consuls?

While Hannibal lived, O Polybius and Panætius! although his city lay before us smouldering in its ashes, ours would be ever insecure.

PANÆTIUS. You said, O Scipio, that the Romans had learnt but recently the business of sieges; and yet many cities in Italy appear to me very strong, which your armies took long ago.

SCIPIO. By force and patience. If Pyrrhus had never invaded us, we should scarcely have excelled the Carthaginians, or even the Nomades, in castrametation, and have been inferior to both in cavalry. Whatever we know, we have learnt from your country, whether it be useful in peace or war—I say your country; for the Macedonians were instructed by the Greeks. The father of Alexander, the first of his family who was not as barbarous and ignorant as a Carian or Armenian slave, received his rudiments in the house of Epaminondas.

PANÆTIUS. Permit me now to return, O Scipio, to a question not unconnected with philosophy. Whether it was prudent or not in Hannibal to invest the city of Rome after his victory, he might somewhere have employed his army, where it should not waste away with luxury.

SCIPIO. Philosophers, O Panætius, seem to know more about luxury than we military men do. I can not say upon what their apprehensions of it are founded, but certainly they sadly fear it.

POLYBIUS. For us. I wish I could as easily make you smile to-day, O Æmilianus, as I shall our good-tempered and liberal Panætius; a philosopher, as we have experienced, less inclined to speak ill or ludicrously of others, be the sect what it may, than any I know or have heard of.

In my early days, one of a different kind, and whose alarms at luxury were (as we discovered) subdued in some degree, in some places, was invited by Critolaus to dine with a party of us, all then young officers, on our march from Achaia into Elis. His florid and open countenance made his company very acceptable: and the more so, as we were informed by Critolaus that he never was importunate with his morality at dinner-time.

Philosophers, if they deserve the name, are by no means in-

different as to the places in which it is their intention to sow the seeds of virtue. They choose the ingenuous, the modest, the sensible, the obedient. We thought rather of where we should place our table. Behind [1] us lay the forest of Pholöe, with its many glens opening to the plain: before us the Temple of Olympian Zeus, indistinctly discernible, leaned against the azure heavens: and the rivulet of Selinus ran a few stadions from us, seen only where it received a smaller streamlet, originating at a fountain close by.

The cistus, the pomegranate, the myrtle, the serpolet, bloomed over our heads and beside us; for we had chosen a platform where a projecting rock, formerly a stone-quarry, shaded us, and where a little rill, of which the spring was there, bedimmed our goblets with the purest water. The awnings we had brought with us to protect us from the sun, were unnecessary for that purpose: we rolled them therefore into two long seats, filling them with moss, which grew profusely a few paces below. "When our guest arrives," said Critolaus, "every one of these flowers will serve him for some moral illustration; every shrub will be the rod of Mercury in his hands." We were impatient for the time of his coming. Thelymnia, the beloved of Critolaus, had been instructed by him in a stratagem, to subvert, or shake at least and stagger, the philosophy of Euthymedes. Has the name escaped me! no matter—perhaps he is dead—if living, he would smile at a recoverable lapse as easily as we did.

Thelymnia wore a dress like ours, and acceded to every advice of Critolaus, excepting that she would not consent so readily to entwine her head with ivy. At first she objected that there was not enough of it for all. Instantly two or three of us pulled down (for nothing is more brittle) a vast quantity from the rock, which loosened some stones, and brought down together with them a bird's nest of the last year. Then she said, "I dare not use this ivy: the omen is a bad one."

"Do you mean the nest, Thelymnia?" said Critolaus.

"No, not the nest so much as the stones," replied she, faltering.

"Ah! those signify the dogmas of Euthymedes, which you, my lovely Thelymnia, are to loosen and throw down."

At this she smiled faintly and briefly, and began to break off some of the more glossy leaves; and we who stood around her were ready

[1] From "Behind" to "by" added in 3rd ed.

to take them and place them in her hair; when suddenly she held them tighter, and let her hand drop. On her lover's asking her why she hesitated, she blushed deeply, and said, "Phoroneus told me I look best in myrtle."

Innocent and simple and most sweet (I remember) was her voice, and, when she had spoken, the traces of it were remaining on her lips. Her beautiful throat itself changed colour; it seemed to undulate; and the roseate predominated in its pearly hue. Phoroneus had been her admirer: she gave the preference to Critolaus: yet the name of Phoroneus at that moment had greater effect upon him than the recollection of his defeat.

Thelymnia recovered herself sooner. We ran wherever we saw myrtles, and there were many about, and she took a part of her coronal from every one of us, smiling on each; but it was only of Critolaus that she asked if he thought that myrtle became her best. "Phoroneus," answered he, not without melancholy, "is infallible as Paris." There was something in the tint of the tender sprays resembling that of the hair they encircled: the blossoms too were white as her forehead. She reminded me of those ancient fables which represent the favourites of the Gods as turning into plants; so accordant and identified was her beauty with the flowers and foliage she had chosen to adorn it.

In the midst of our felicitations to her we heard the approach of horses, for the ground was dry and solid; and Euthymedes was presently with us. The mounted slave who led off his master's charger, for such he appeared to be in all points, suddenly disappeared; I presume lest the sight of luxury should corrupt him. I know not where the groom rested, nor where the two animals (no neglected ones certainly, for they were plump and stately) found provender.

Euthymedes was of lofty stature, had somewhat passed the middle age, but the Graces had not left his person, as they usually do when it begins to bear an impression of authority. He was placed by the side of Thelymnia. Gladness and expectation sparkled from every eye: the beauty of Thelymnia seemed to be a light sent from heaven for the festival; a light the pure radiance of which cheered and replenished the whole heart. Desire of her was chastened, I may rather say was removed, by the confidence of Critolaus in our friendship.

PANÆTIUS. Well said ! The story begins to please and interest me. Where love finds the soul he neglects the body, and only turns to it in his idleness as to an afterthought. Its best allurements are but the nuts and figs of the divine repast.

POLYBIUS. We exulted in the felicity of our friend, and wished for nothing which even he would not have granted. Happy was the man from whom the glancing eye of Thelymnia seemed to ask some advice, how she should act or answer : happy he who, offering her an apple in the midst of her discourse, fixed his keen survey upon the next, anxious to mark where she had touched it. For it was a calamity to doubt upon what streak or speck, while she was inattentive to the basket, she had placed her finger.

PANÆTIUS. I wish, Æmilianus, you would look rather more severely than you do—upon my life ! I can not—and put an end to these dithyrambics. The ivy runs about us, and may infuriate us.

SCIPIO. The dithyrambics, I do assure you, Panætius, are not of my composing. We are both in danger from the same thyrsus : we will parry it as well as we can, or bend our heads before it.

PANÆTIUS. Come, Polybius, we must follow you then, I see, or fly you.

POLYBIUS. Would you rather hear the remainder another time ?

PANÆTIUS. By Hercules ! I have more curiosity than becomes me.

POLYBIUS. No doubt, in the course of the conversation, Euthymedes had made the discovery we hoped to obviate. Never was his philosophy more amiable or more impressive. Pleasure was treated as a friend, not as a master : many things were found innocent that had long been doubtful : excesses alone were condemned. Thelymnia was enchanted by the frankness and liberality of her philosopher, although, in addressing her, more purity on his part and more rigour were discernible. His delicacy was exquisite. When his eyes met hers, they did not retire with rapidity and confusion, but softly and complacently, and as though it were the proper time and season of reposing from the splendours they had encountered. Hers from the beginning were less governable : when she found that they were so, she contrived scheme after scheme for diverting them from the table, and entertaining his unobservedly.

The higher part of the quarry, which had protected us always from the western sun, was covered with birch and hazel ; the lower with innumerable shrubs, principally the arbutus and myrtle.

"Look at those goats above us," said Thelymnia. "What has tangled their hair so? they seem wet."

"They have been lying on the cistus in the plain," replied Euthymedes: "many of its broken flowers are sticking upon them yet, resisting all the efforts, as you see, of hoof and tongue."

"How beauteous," said she, "are the flexible and crimson branches of this arbutus," taking it in one hand and beating with it the back of the other. "It seems only to have come out of its crevice to pat my shoulder at dinner, and twitch my myrtle when my head leaned back. I wonder how it can grow in such a rock."

"The arbutus," answered he, "clings to the Earth with the most fondness where it finds her in the worst poverty, and covers her bewintered bosom with leaves, berries, and flowers. On the same branch is unripe fruit of the most vivid green; ripening, of the richest orange; ripened, of perfect scarlet. The maidens of Tyre could never give so brilliant and sweet a lustre to the fleeces of Miletus; nor did they ever string such even and graceful pearls as the blossoms are, for the brides of Assyrian or Persian kings."

"And yet the myrtle is preferred to the arbutus," said Thelymnia, with some slight uneasiness.

"I know why," replied he—"may I tell it?" She bowed and smiled, perhaps not without the expectation of some compliment. He continued—"The myrtle has done what the arbutus comes too late for.

"The myrtle has covered with her starry crown the beloved of the reaper and vintager: the myrtle was around the head of many a maiden celebrated in song, when the breezes of autumn scattered the first leaves, and rustled among them on the ground, and when she cried timidly, Rise, rise! people are coming! here! there! many!"

Thelymnia said, "That now is not true. Where did you hear it?" and in a softer and lower voice, if I may trust Androcles, "O Euthymedes, do not believe it!"

Either he did not hear her, or dissembled it; and went on—"This deserves preference; this deserves immortality; this deserves a place in the Temple of Venus; in her hand, in her hair, in her breast: Thelymnia herself wears it."

We laughed and applauded: she blushed and looked grave and sighed—for she had never heard anyone, I imagine, talk so long at once. However it was, she sighed: I saw and heard her. Crito-

laus gave her some glances: she did not catch them. One of the party clapped his hands longer than the rest, whether in approbation or derision of this rhapsody, delivered with glee and melody, and entreated the philosopher to indulge us with a few of his adventures.

"You deserve, young man," said Euthymedes gravely, "to have as few as I have had, you whose idle curiosity would thus intemperately reveal the most sacred mysteries. Poets and philosophers may reason on love, and dream about it, but rarely do they possess the object, and, whenever they do, that object is the invisible deity of a silent worshipper."

"Reason then or dream," replied the other, breathing an air of scorn to soothe the soreness of the reproof.

"When we reason on love," said Euthymedes, "we often talk as if we were dreaming: let me try whether the recital of my dream can make you think I talk as if I were reasoning. You may call it a dream, a vision, or what you will.

"I was in a place not very unlike this, my head lying back against a rock, where its crevices were tufted with soft and odoriferous herbs, and where vine leaves protected my face from the sun, and from the bees, which however were less likely to molest me, being busy in their first hours of honey-making among the blossoms. Sleep soon fell upon me; for of all philosophers I am certainly the drowsiest, though perhaps there are many quite of equal ability in communicating the gift of drowsiness. Presently I saw three figures, two of which were beautiful, very differently, but in the same degree: the other was much less so. The least of the three, at the first glance, I recognised to be Love, although I saw no wings, nor arrows, nor quiver, nor torch, nor emblem of any kind designating his attributes. The next was not Venus, nor a grace, nor a nymph, nor Goddess of whom in worship or meditation I had ever conceived an idea; and yet my heart persuaded me she was a Goddess, and from the manner in which she spoke to Love, and he again to her, I was convinced she must be. Quietly and unmovedly as she was standing, her figure I perceived was adapted to the perfection of activity. With all the succulence and suppleness of early youth, scarcely beyond puberty, it however gave me the idea, from its graceful and easy languor, of its being possessed by a fondness for repose. Her eyes were large and serene, and of a quality to exhibit the intensity of thought, or even the habitude of reflection, but incapable of expressing the plenitude of

joy; and her countenance was tinged with so delicate a colour, that it appeared an effluence from an irradiated cloud, passing over it in the heavens. The third figure, who sometimes stood in one place and sometimes in another, and of whose countenance I could only distinguish that it was pale, anxious, and mistrustful, interrupted her perpetually. I listened attentively and with curiosity to the conversation, and by degrees I caught the appellations they interchanged. The one I found was Hope; and I wondered I did not find it out sooner: the other was Fear: which I should not have found out at all; for she did not look terrible nor aghast, but more like Sorrow or Despondency. The first words I could collect of Hope were these, spoken very mildly, and rather with a look of appeal than of accusation. 'Too surely you have forgotten, for never was child more forgetful or more ungrateful, how many times I have carried you in my bosom, when even your mother drove you from her, and when you could find no other resting-place in heaven or earth.'

"'O unsteady unruly Love!' cried the pale Goddess with much energy, 'it has often been by my intervention that thy wavering authority was fixed. For this I have thrown alarm after alarm into the heedless breast that Hope had once beguiled, and that was growing insensible and torpid under her feebler influence. I do not upbraid thee; and it never was my nature to caress thee; but I claim from thee my portion of the human heart, mine, ever mine, abhorrent as it may be of me. Let Hope stand on one side of thy altars, but let my place be on the other; or, I swear by all the Gods! not any altars shalt thou possess upon the globe.'

"She ceased—and Love trembled. He turned his eyes upon Hope, as if in his turn appealing to her. She said, 'It must be so; it was so from the beginning of the world: only let me never lose you from my sight.' She clasped her hands upon her breast, as she said it, and he looked on her with a smile, and was going up (I thought) to kiss her, when he was recalled, and stopped.

"'Where Love is, there will I be also,' said Fear, 'and even thou, O Hope! never shalt be beyond my power.'

"At these words I saw them both depart. I then looked toward Love: I did not see him go; but he was gone."

The narration being ended, there were some who remarked what very odd things dreams are: but Thelymnia looked almost as if she

herself was dreaming; and Alcimus, who sat opposite, and fancied she was pondering on what the vision could mean, said it appeared to him a thing next to certainty, that it signified how love can not exist without hope or without fear. Euthymedes nodded assent, and assured him that a soothsayer in great repute had given him the same interpretation. Upon which the younger friends of Alcimus immediately took the ivy from his forehead, and crowned him with laurel, as being worthy to serve Apollo. But they did it with so much noise and festivity, that, before the operation was completed, he began to suspect they were in jest. Thelymnia had listened to many stories in her life-time, yet never had she heard one from any man before who had been favoured by the deities with a vision. Hope and Love, as her excited imagination represented them to her, seemed still to be with Euthymedes. She thought the tale would have been better without the mention of Fear: but perhaps this part was only a dream, all the rest a really true vision. She had many things to ask him: she did not know when, nor exactly what, for she was afraid of putting too hard a question to him in the presence of so many, lest it might abash him if he could not answer it: but she wished to ask him something, anything. She soon did it, not without faltering, and was enchanted by the frankness and liberality of her philosopher.

"Did you ever love?" said she smiling, though not inclined to smile, but doing it to conceal (as in her simplicity she thought it would) her blushes, and looking a little aside, at the only cloud in the heavens, which crossed the moon, as if adorning her for a festival, with a fillet of pale sapphire and interlucent gold.

"I thought I did," replied he, lowering his eyes that she might lower hers to rest upon him.

"Do then people ever doubt this?" she asked in wonder, looking full in his face with earnest curiosity.

"Alas!" said he softly, "until a few hours ago, until Thelymnia was placed beside me, until an ungenerous heart exposed the treasure that should have dwelt within it, to the tarnish of a stranger, if that stranger had the baseness to employ the sophistry that was in part expected from him, never should I have known that I had not loved before. We may be uncertain if a vase or an image be of the richest metal, until the richest metal be set right against it. Thelymnia! if I thought it possible at any time hereafter, that you should love

me as I love you, I would exert to the uttermost my humble powers of persuasion to avert it."

"Oh! there is no danger," said she, disconcerted; "I did not love anyone: I thought I did, just like you; but indeed, indeed, Euthymedes, I was equally in an error. Women have dropped into the grave from it, and have declared to the last moment that they never loved: men have sworn they should die with desperation, and have lived merrily, and have dared to run into the peril fifty times. They have hard cold hearts, incommunicative and distrustful."

"Have I too, Thelymnia?" gently he expostulated.

"No, not you," said she; "you may believe I was not thinking of you when I was speaking. But the idea does really make me smile and almost laugh, that you should fear me, supposing it possible, if you could suppose any such thing. Love does not kill men, take my word for it."

He looked rather in sorrow than in doubt, and answered: "Unpropitious love may not kill us always, may not deprive us at once of what at their festivals the idle and inconsiderate call life; but, O Thelymnia! our lives are truly at an end when we are beloved no longer. Existence may be continued, or rather may be renewed, yet the agonies of death and the chilliness of the grave have been passed through; nor are there Elysian fields, nor the sports that delighted in former times, awaiting us, nor pleasant converse, nor walks with linked hands, nor intermitted songs, nor vengeful kisses for leaving them off abruptly, nor looks that shake us to assure us afterward, nor that bland inquietude, as gently tremulous as the expansion of buds into blossoms, which hurries us from repose to exercise and from exercise to repose."

"O! I have been very near loving!" sighed Thelymnia. "Where in the world can a philosopher have learnt all this about it!"

The beauty of Thelymnia, her blushes, first at the deceit, afterward at the encouragement she received in her replies, and lastly from some other things which we could not penetrate, highly gratified Critolaus. Soon however (for wine always brings back to us our last strong feeling) he thought again of Phoroneus, as young, as handsome, and once (is that the word?) as dear to her. He saddened at the myrtle on the head of his beloved; it threw shadows and

gloom upon his soul; her smiles, her spirits, her wit, and, above all, her nods of approbation, wounded him. He sighed when she covered her face with her hand; when she disclosed it he sighed again. Every glance of pleasure, every turn of surprise, every movement of her body, pained and oppressed him. He cursed in his heart whoever it was who had stuffed that portion of the couch; there was so little moss, thought he, between Thelymnia and Euthymedes. He might have seen Athos part them, and would have murmured still.

The rest of us were in admiration at the facility and grace with which Thelymnia sustained her part, and observing less Critolaus than we did in the commencement, when he acknowledged and enjoyed our transports, indifferently and contentedly saw him rise from the table and go away, thinking his departure a preconcerted section of the stratagem. He retired, as he told us afterward, into a grot. So totally was his mind abstracted from the entertainment, he left the table athirst, covered as it was with fruit and wine, and abundant as ran beside us the clearest and sweetest and most refreshing rill. He related to me that, at the extremity of the cavern, he applied his parched tongue to the dripping rock, shunning the light of day, the voice of friendship, so violent was his desire of solitude and concealment, and he held his forehead and his palms against it when his lips had closed. We knew not and suspected not his feelings at the time, and rejoiced at the anticipation of the silly things a philosopher should have whispered, which Thelymnia in the morning of the festival had promised us to detail the next day. Love [1] is apt to get entangled and to trip and stumble when he puts on the garb of Friendship: it is too long and loose for him to walk in, although he sometimes finds it convenient for a covering. Euthymedes the philosopher made this discovery, to which perhaps others may lay equal claim.

After the lesson he had been giving her, which amused her in the dictation, she stood composed and thoughtful, and then said hesitatingly, "But would it be quite proper [2]? would there be nothing of insincerity and falsehood in it, my Critolaus?" He caught her up in his arms, and, as in his enthusiasm he had raised her head above his, he kissed her bosom. She reproved and

[1] From "Love" to "claim" added in 3rd ed.
[2] 1st ed. and *Ablett's Literary Hours* read (for "proper"): "right."

pardoned him, making him first declare and protest he would never do the like again. "O soul of truth and delicacy!" cried he aloud; and Thelymnia, no doubt, trembled lest her lover should in a moment be forsworn; so imminent and inevitable seemed the repetition of his offence. But he observed on her eyelashes, what had arisen from his precipitation in our presence,

> A hesitating long suspended tear,
> Like that which hangs upon the vine fresh-pruned,
> Until the morning kisses it away.

The nymphs, who often drive men wild (they tell us) have led me astray: I must return with you to the grot. We gave every facility to the stratagem. One slipt away in one direction, another in another; but, at a certain distance, each was desirous of joining some comrade, and of laughing together; yet each reproved the laughter, even when far off, lest it should do harm, reserving it for the morrow. While[1] they walked along, conversing, the words of Euthymedes fell on the ears of Thelymnia softly as cistus-petals, fluttering and panting for a moment in the air, fall on the thirsty sand. She, in a voice that makes the brain dizzy as it plunges into the breast, replied to him,

"O Euthymedes! you must have lived your whole life-time in the hearts of women to know them so thoroughly: I never knew mine before you taught me."

Euthymedes now was silent, being one of the few wise men whom love ever made wiser. But, in his silence and abstraction, he took especial care to press the softer part of her arm against his heart, that she might be sensible of its quick pulsation: and, as she rested her elbow within the curvature of his, the slenderest of her fingers solicited, first one, then another, of those beneath them, but timidly, briefly, inconclusively, and then clung around it pressingly for countenance and support. Panætius, you have seen the mountains on the left hand, eastward, when you are in Olympia, and perhaps the little stream that runs from the nearest of them into the Alpheus. Could you have seen them that evening! the moon never shone so calmly, so brightly, upon Latmos, nor the torch of Love before her. And yet many of the stars were visible; the most beautiful were among them; and as Euthymedes taught Thelymnia

[1] From "While" to "support" added in 3rd ed.

their names, their radiance seemed more joyous, more effulgent, more beneficent. If you have ever walked forth into the wilds and open plains upon such moonlight nights, cautious as you are, I will venture to say, Panætius, you have often tript, even though the stars were not your study. There was an arm to support or to catch Thelymnia: yet she seemed incorrigible. Euthymedes was patient: at last he did I know not what, which was followed by a reproof, and a wonder how he could have done so, and another how he could answer for it. He looked ingenuously and apologetically, forgetting to correct his fault in the meanwhile. She listened to him attentively, pushing his hand away at intervals, yet less frequently and less resolutely in the course of his remonstrance, particularly when he complained to her that the finer and more delicate part of us, the eye, may wander at leisure over what is in its way; yet that its dependants in the corporeal system must not follow it; that they must hunger and faint in the service of a power so rich and absolute. "This being hard, unjust, and cruel," said he, "never can be the ordinance of the Gods. Love alone feeds the famishing: Love alone places all things, both of matter and of mind, in perfect harmony; Love hath less to learn from Wisdom than Wisdom hath to learn from Love."

"Modest man!" said she to herself, "there is a great deal of truth in what he says, considering he is a philosopher." She then asked him, after a pause, why he had not spoken so in the conversation on love, which appeared to give animation, mirth, and wit, to the dullest of the company, and even to make the wines of Chios, Crete, and Lesbos, sparkle with fresh vivacity in their goblets.

"I who was placed by the fountain-head," replied he, "had no inclination to follow the shallow and slender stream, taking its course toward streets and lanes, and dipt into and muddied by unhallowed and uncleanly hands. After dinner such topics are usually introduced, when the objects that ought to inspire our juster sentiments are gone away. An indelicacy worse than Thracian! The purest gales of heaven in the most perfect solitudes, should alone lift up the aspiration of our souls to the divinities all men worship."

"Sensible creature!" sighed Thelymnia in her bosom, "how rightly he does think!"

"Come, fairest of wanderers," whispered he softly and persuasively, "such will I call you, though the stars hear me, and though

the Gods too in a night like this pursue their loves upon earth—the moon has no little pools filled with her light under the rock yonder; she deceives us in the depth of these hollows, like the limpid sea. Beside, we are here among the pinks and sand-roses: do they never prick your ankles with their stems and thorns? Even their leaves at this late season are enough to hurt you."

"I think they do," replied she, and thanked him, with a tender timid glance, for some fresh security his arm or hand had given her in escaping from them. "O now we are quite out of them all! How cool is the saxifrage! how cool the ivy-leaves!"

"I fancy, my sweet scholar! or shall I rather say (for you have been so oftener) my sweet teacher! they are not ivy-leaves: to me they appear to be periwinkles."

"I will gather some and see," said Thelymnia.

Periwinkles cover wide and deep hollows: of what are they incapable when the convolvulus is in league with them! She slipped from the arm of Euthymedes, and in an instant had disappeared. In an instant too he had followed.

PANÆTIUS. These are mad pranks, and always end ill. Moonlights! can not we see them quietly from the tops of our houses, or from the plain pavement? Must we give challenges to mastiffs, make appointments with wolves, run after asps, and languish for stone-quarries? Unwary philosopher and simple girl! Were they found again?

POLYBIUS. Yea, by Castor! and most unwillingly.

SCIPIO. I do not wonder. When the bones are broken, without the consolation of some great service rendered in such misfortune, and when beauty must become deformity, I can well believe that they both would rather have perished.

POLYBIUS. Amaranth on the couch of Jove and Hebe was never softer than the bed they fell on. Critolaus had advanced to the opening of the cavern: he had heard the exclamation of Thelymnia as she was falling—he forgave her—he ran to her for her forgiveness—he heard some low sounds—he smote his heart, else it had fainted in him—he stopped.

Euthymedes was raising up Thelymnia, forgetful (as was too apparent) of himself. "Traitor!" exclaimed the fiery Critolaus, "thy blood shall pay for this. Impostor! whose lesson this very day was, that luxury is the worst of poisons."

"Critolaus," answered he calmly, drawing his robe about him (for,[1] falling in so rough a place, his vesture was a little disordered), "we will not talk of blood; but as for my lesson of to-day, I must defend it. In few words then, since I think we are none of us disposed for many, hemlock does not hurt goats, nor luxury philosophers."

Thelymnia had risen more beautiful from her confusion; but her colour soon went away, and, if any slight trace of it were remaining on her cheeks, the modest moonlight and the severer stars would let none show itself. She looked as the statue of Pygmalion would have looked, had she been destined the hour after animation to return into her inanimate state. Offering no excuse, she was the worthier of pardon: but there is one hour in which pardon never entered the human breast, and that hour was this. Critolaus, who always had ridiculed the philosophers, now hated them from the bottom of his heart. Every sect was detestable to him, the Stoic, the Platonic, the Epicurean[2]; all equally; but especially those hypocrites and impostors in each, who, under the cloak of philosophy, come forward with stately figures, prepossessing countenances, and bland discourse.

PANÆTIUS. We do not desire to hear what such foolish men think of philosophers, true or false: but pray tell us how he acted on his own notable discovery: for I opine he was the unlikeliest of the three to grow quite calm on a sudden.

POLYBIUS. He went away; not without fierce glances at the stars, reproaches to the Gods themselves, and serious and sad reflections upon destiny. Being however a pious man by constitution and education, he thought he had spoken of the omens unadvisedly, and found other interpretations for the stones we had thrown down with the ivy. "And ah!" said he sighing, "the bird's nest of last year too! I now know what that is!"

PANÆTIUS. Polybius, I considered you too grave a man to report such idle stories. The manner is not yours: I rather think you have torn out a page or two from some love-feast (not generally known) of Plato.

[1] From "for" to "disordered" added in 3rd ed.

[2] 1st ed. and *Ablett's Literary Hours* read: "Epicurean, the eclectic; all equally; but one above the rest, which he would not designate to his most intimate friend, and this sect is denominated, not from portico or grove or garden, but from a single plant, and we know it by the name of the robust. PANÆTIUS," etc.

POLYBIUS. Your judgment has for once deserted you, my friend. If Plato had been present, he might then indeed have described what he saw, and elegantly; but if he had feigned the story, the name that most interests us would not have ended with a vowel.

SCIPIO. You convince me, Polybius.

PANÆTIUS. I join my hands, and give them to you.

POLYBIUS. My usual manner is without variety. I endeavour to collect as much sound sense and as many solid facts as I can, to distribute them as commodiously, and to keep them as clear of ornament. If anyone thought of me or my style in reading my history, I should condemn myself as a defeated man.

SCIPIO. Polybius, you are by far the wisest that ever wrote history, though many wise have written it, and if your facts are sufficiently abundant, your work will be the most interesting and important.

POLYBIUS. Live then, Scipio!

PANÆTIUS. The Gods grant it!

POLYBIUS. I know what I can do and what I can not (the proudest words perhaps that ever man uttered), I say it plainly to you, my sincere and judicious monitor; but you must also let me say that, doubtful whether I could amuse our Æmilianus in his present mood, I would borrow a tale, unaccustomed as I am to such, from the libraries of Miletus, or snatch it from the bosom of Elephantis.

SCIPIO. Your friendship comes under various forms to me, my dear Polybius, but it is always warm and always welcome. Nothing can be kinder or more delicate in you, than to diversify as much as possible our conversation this day. Panætius would be more argumentative on luxury than I: even Euthymedes (it appears) was unanswerable.

PANÆTIUS. O the knave! such men bring reproaches upon philosophy.

SCIPIO. I see no more reason why they should, than why a slattern who empties a certain vase on your head in the street, should make you cry, "O Jupiter! what a curse is water!"

PANÆTIUS. I am ready to propose almost such an exchange with you, Æmilianus, as Diomedes with Glaucus—my robe for yours.

SCIPIO. Panætius, could it be done, you would wish it undone. The warfare you undertake is the more difficult: we have not enemies on both sides, as you have.

PANÆTIUS. If you had seen straight, you would have seen that the offer was, to exchange my philosophy for yours. You need less meditation, and employ more, than any man. Now if you have aught to say on luxury, let me hear it.

SCIPIO. It would be idle to run into the parts of it, and to make a definition of that which we agree on ; but it is not so to remind you that we were talking of it in soldiers ; for the pleasant tale of Thelymnia is enough to make us forget them, even while the trumpet is sounding. Believe me, my friend (or ask Polybius), a good general will turn this formidable thing luxury to some account. He will take care that, like the strong vinegar the legionaries carry with them, it should be diluted, and thus be useful.

PANÆTIUS. Then it is luxury no longer.

SCIPIO. True ; and now tell me, Panætius, or you Polybius, what city was ever so exuberant in riches, as to maintain a great army long together in sheer luxury ? I am not speaking of cities that have been sacked, but of the allied and friendly, whose interests are to be observed, whose affection to be conciliated and retained. Hannibal knew this and minded it.

POLYBIUS. You might have also added to the interrogation, if you had thought proper, those cities which *have* been sacked ; for there plenty is soon wasted, and not soon supplied again.

SCIPIO. Let us look closer at the soldier's board, and see what is on it in the rich Capua. Is plentiful and wholesome food luxury ? or do soldiers run into the market-place for a pheasant ? or do those on whom they are quartered pray and press them to eat it ? Suppose they went hunting quails, hares, partridges ; would it render them less active ? There are no wild-boars in that neighbourhood, or we might expect from a boar-hunt a visitation of the gout. Suppose the men drew their idea of pleasure from the school or from the practices of Euthymedes. One vice is corrected by another, where a higher principle does not act, and where a man does not exert the proudest dominion over the most turbulent of states—himself. Hannibal, we may be sure, never allowed his army to repose in utter inactivity ; no, nor to remain a single day without its exercise—a battle, a march, a foraging, a conveyance of wood or water, a survey of the banks of rivers, a fathoming of their depth, a certification of their soundness or unsoundness at bottom, a measurement of the greater or less extent of their fords, a review, or a castrametation.

The plenty of his camp at Capua (for you hardly can imagine, Panætius, that the soldiers had in a military sense the freedom of the city, and took what they pleased without pay and without restriction) attached to him the various nations of which it was composed, and kept together the heterogeneous and discordant mass. It was time that he should think of this; for probably there was not a soldier left who had not lost in battle or by fatigue his dearest friend and comrade.

Dry bread and hard blows are excellent things in themselves, and military requisites—to those who converse on them over their cups, turning their heads for the approbation of others on whose bosom they recline, and yawning from sad disquietude [1] at the degeneracy and effeminacy of the age. But there is finally a day when the cement of power begins to lose its strength and coherency, and when the fabric must be kept together by pointing it anew, and by protecting it a little from that rigour of the seasons which at first compacted it.

The story of Hannibal and his army wasting away in luxury, is common, general, universal: its absurdity is remarked by few, or rather by none.

POLYBIUS. The wisest of us are slow to disbelieve what we have learned early: yet this story has always been to me incredible.

SCIPIO. Beside the reasons I have adduced, is it necessary to remind you that Campania is subject to diseases which incapacitate the soldier? Those of Hannibal were afflicted by them: few indeed perished; but they were debilitated by their malady, and while they were waiting for the machinery which (even if they had had the artificers among them) could not have been constructed in double the time requisite for importing it, the period of dismay at Rome, if ever it existed, had elapsed. The wonder is less that Hannibal did not take Rome, than that he was able to remain in Italy, not having taken it. Considering how he held together, how he disciplined, how he provisioned (the most difficult thing of all, in the face of such enemies) an army in great part, as one would imagine, so intractable and wasteful; what commanders, what soldiers, what rivers, and what mountains, opposed him; I think, Polybius, you will hardly admit to a parity or comparison with him, in the rare union of political and military science, the most distinguished of your own

[1] 1st ed., by a misprint, reads: "disquieted."

countrymen: not Philopœmen,[1] nor Philip of Macedon; if indeed you can hear me without anger and indignation name a barbarian king with Greeks.

POLYBIUS. When kings are docile, and pay due respect to those who are wiser and more virtuous than themselves, I would not point at them as objects of scorn or contumely, even among the free. There is little danger that men educated as we have been should value them too highly, or that men educated as they have been should eclipse the glory of[2] Philopœmen. People in a republic know that their power and existence must depend on the zeal and assiduity, the courage and integrity, of those they employ in their first offices of state; kings on the contrary lay the foundations of their power on abject hearts and prostituted intellects, and fear and abominate those whom the breath of God hath raised higher than the breath of man. Hence, from being the dependants of their own slaves, both they and their slaves become at last the dependants of free nations, and alight from their cars to be tied by the neck to the cars of better men.

SCIPIO. Deplorable condition! if their education had allowed any sense of honour to abide in them. But we must consider them as the tulips and anemones and other gaudy flowers, that shoot from the earth to be looked upon in idleness, and to be snapped by the stick or broken by the wind, without our interest, care, or notice. We can not thus calmly contemplate the utter subversion of a mighty capital; we can not thus indifferently stand over the strong agony of an expiring nation, after a gasp of years in a battle of ages, to win a world, or be for ever fallen.

Seldom[3] are we prone to commiserate the misfortunes of our enemies: the reason is, they are seldom great or virtuous men; and when they are, we are apt to think otherwise. But Hannibal hath shown greatness both in prosperity and adversity. He hath conciliated both the most barbarous and the most civilised of mankind, the most frugal and the most luxurious, the mountaineers of Helvetia, the princes of Campania; and, if truth is ever painful to utter, it is painful now, he hath vanquished the most experienced in war. Again I see the Alps rise up before me; and I witness the discomfiture of

[1] 1st ed. reads: "Philopœmen nor Timoleon (the man who approaches more nearly to the Gods than any) nor Philip."
[2] 1st ed. reads: "of Timoleon and Philopœmen."
[3] From "Seldom" to "him" added in 3rd ed.

that commander whose name I reverence and bear. Resentment hath no place in my bosom: I can pity the man whom an ungrateful country helped his enemies to throw down; who flies from potentate to potentate for protection; who is destined to die not in the land that nurtured him, probably not in the field of battle, probably not with kindred or friends about him. Enough! enough! somewhat of this may befall even those who are now prosperous and triumphant.

PANÆTIUS. We see little when we are cast down; and when we are raised high we are ill-inclined to see all we might. Ingratitude is a monster not peculiar to Africa.

POLYBIUS. The breed will never be exterminated.

PANÆTIUS. Never; be sure of that: but there are men, however few of them, in all countries, who know a remedy for its venom.

POLYBIUS. What can that be?

PANÆTIUS. Covering the fresh wound with fresh kindness. It is not everyone who has the privilege of making an ingrate; there must be power and will to benefit. Hannibal, at all events, owes but small gratitude to the Roman Senate; yet, if his character is indeed so exalted as I am willing to suppose it, he would not be insensible to the praises his vanquisher hath bestowed on him.[1] You estimate, O Æmilianus, the abilities of a general, not by the number of battles he has won, nor of enemies he hath slain or led captive, but by the combinations he hath formed, the blows of fortune he hath parried or avoided, the prejudices he hath removed, and the difficulties of every kind he hath overcome. In like manner we should consider kings. Educated still more barbarously than other barbarians, sucking their milk alternately from Vice and Folly, guided in their first steps by Duplicity and Flattery, whatever they do but decently is worthy of applause; whatever they do virtuously, of admiration. I would say it even to Caius Gracchus; I would tell him it even in the presence of his mother; unappalled by her majestic mien, her truly Roman sanctity, her brow that can not frown, but that reproves with pity; for I am not so hostile to royalty as other philosophers are—perhaps because I have been willing to see less of it.

SCIPIO.[2] Cornelia is dearer to me for her virtues than even for our consanguinity; and I reciprocate the fondness of her brave and intelligent sons, whose estrangement from our order I fear to trace

[1] End of passage added in 3rd ed.
[2] From "SCIPIO" to "tomb" added in 3rd ed.

and grieve to reprehend. Let us rather look once again toward your own country, Greece. Many have been signally courageous, signally judicious, in battle; many by their eloquence have been leaders at Rome, where tumults and mutinies are more ready to break out and more difficult to quell; many have managed the high and weighty magistratures with integrity and discretion, with hand equally firm and pure. Any one of these qualities is sufficient to constitute a memorable man. But, O Panætius and Polybius, we do not find in the records of history, we do not find in the regions of fable, a greater than your Pericles, your Epaminondas, your Philopœmen.

Polybius. Praise from you, Æmilianus, would have supported the heart of Philopœmen, which sank only under the ruins of our country. Of such materials as this praise, such glorification from superior minds, are the lamps that shine inextinguishable in the tomb.[1] Eternal thanks to the Romans! who, whatever reason they may have had to treat the Greeks as enemies, to traverse and persecute such men as Lycortas my father, and as Philopœmen my early friend, to consume our cities with fire, and to furrow our streets with torrents (as we have heard lately) issuing from the remolten images of Gods and heroes, have however so far respected the mother of Civilisation and of Law, as never to permit the cruel mockery of erecting Barbarism and Royalty on their vacant bases.

Panætius. Our ancient institutions in part exist; we lost the rest when we lost the simplicity of our forefathers. Let it be our glory that we have resisted the most populous and wealthy nations, and that, having been conquered, we have been conquered by the most virtuous; that every one of our chief cities hath produced a greater number of illustrious men than all the remainder of the earth around us; that no man can anywhere enter his hall or portico, and see the countenances of his ancestors from their marble columels, without a commemorative and grateful sense of obligation to us; that neither his solemn feasts nor his cultivated fields are silent on it; that not the lamp which shows him the glad faces of his children, and prolongs his studies, and watches by his rest; that not the ceremonies whereby he hopes to avert the vengeance of the Gods, nor the tenderer ones whereon are founded the affinities of domestic life, nor finally those which lead toward another; would have existed in this country, if Greece had not conveyed them. Bethink thee,

[1] End of passage added in 3rd ed.

Scipio, how little hath been done by any other nation, to promote the moral dignity or enlarge the social pleasures of the human race. What parties ever met, in their most populous cities, for the enjoyment of liberal and speculative conversation? What Alcibiades, elated with war and glory, turned his youthful mind from general admiration and from the cheers and caresses of coeval friends, to strengthen and purify it under the cold reproofs of the aged? What Aspasia led Philosophy to smile on Love, or taught Love to reverence Philosophy? These, as thou knowest, are not the safest guides for either sex to follow; yet in these were united the gravity and the graces of wisdom, never seen, never imagined, out of Athens.

I would not offend thee by comparing the genius of the Roman people with ours: the offence is removable, and in part removed already, by thy hand. The little of sound learning, the little of pure wit, that hath appeared in Rome from her foundation, hath been concentrated under thy roof: one tile would cover it. Have we not walked together, O Scipio, by starlight, on the shores of Surrentum and Baiæ, of Ischia and Caprea, and hath it not occurred to thee that the heavens themselves, both what we see of them and what lieth above our vision, are peopled with our heroes and heroines? The ocean, that roars so heavily in the ears of other men, hath for us its tuneful shells, its placid nymphs, and its beneficent ruler. The trees of the forest, the flowers, the plants, passed indiscriminately elsewhere, awaken and warm our affection; they mingle with the objects of our worship; they breathe the spirit of our ancestors; they lived in our form; they spoke in our language; they suffered as our daughters may suffer; the deities revisit them with pity; and some (we think) dwell among them.

Scipio. Poetry! poetry!

Panætius. Yes; I own it. The spirit of Greece, passing through and ascending above the world, hath so animated universal nature, that the very rocks and woods, the very torrents and wilds burst forth with it—and it falls, Æmilianus, even from me.

Scipio. It is from Greece I have received my friends Panætius and Polybius.

Panætius. Say more, Æmilianus! You have indeed said it here already; but say it again at Rome: it is Greece who taught the Romans all beyond the rudiments of war: it is Greece who placed in your hand the sword that conquered Carthage.

III. METELLUS AND MARIUS

AT NUMANTIA IN SPAIN, 133 B.C.

(*Imag. Convers.*, v., 1829; *Wks.*, i., 1846; *Imag Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

METELLUS. Well met, Caius Marius! My orders are to find instantly a centurion who shall mount the walls; one capable of observation, acute in remark, prompt, calm, active, intrepid. The Numantians are sacrificing to the Gods in secresy: they have sounded the horn once only; and hoarsely, and low, and mournfully.

MARIUS. Was that ladder I see yonder among the caper-bushes and purple lilies, under where the fig-tree grows out of the rampart, left for me?

METELLUS. Even so, wert thou willing. Wouldst thou mount it?

MARIUS. Rejoicingly. If none are below or near, may I explore the state of things by entering the city?

METELLUS. Use thy discretion in that.

What seest thou? Wouldst thou leap down? Lift the ladder.

MARIUS. Are there spikes in it where it sticks in the turf? I should slip else.

METELLUS. How! bravest of our centurions, art even thou afraid? Seest thou anyone by?

MARIUS. Ay; some hundreds close beneath me.

METELLUS. Retire then. Hasten back; I will protect thy descent.

MARIUS. May I speak, O Metellus, without an offence to discipline?

METELLUS. Say.

MARIUS. Listen! Dost thou not hear!

METELLUS. Shame on thee! alight, alight! my shield shall cover thee.

MARIUS. There is a murmur like the hum of bees in the beanfield of Cereate *; for the sun is hot, and the ground is thirsty. When

* The farm of Marius, near Arpinum.—W. S. L.

will it have drunk up for me the blood that has run, and is yet oozing on it, from those fresh bodies!

METELLUS. How? We have not fought for many days; what bodies then are fresh ones?

MARIUS. Close beneath the wall are those of infants and of girls: in the middle of the road are youths, emaciated; some either unwounded or wounded months ago; some on their spears, others on their swords: no few have received in mutual death the last interchange of friendship; their daggers unite them, hilt to hilt, bosom to bosom.

METELLUS. Mark rather the living—what are they about?

MARIUS. About the sacrifice, which portends them, I conjecture, but little good, it burns sullenly and slowly. The victim will lie upon the pyre till morning, and still be unconsumed, unless they bring more fuel.

I will leap down and walk on cautiously, and return with tidings, if death should spare me.

Never was any race of mortals so unmilitary as these Numantians: no watch, no stations, no palisades across the streets.

METELLUS. Did they want then all the wood for the altar?

MARIUS. It appears so—I will return anon.

METELLUS. The Gods speed thee, my brave honest Marius!

MARIUS (*returned*). The ladder should have been better spiked for that slippery ground. I am down again safe however. Here a man may walk securely, and without picking his steps.

METELLUS. Tell me, Caius, what thou sawest.

MARIUS. The streets of Numantia.

METELLUS. Doubtless; but what else?

MARIUS. The temples and markets and places of exercise and fountains.

METELLUS. Art thou crazed, centurion! what more? speak plainly, at once, and briefly.

MARIUS. I beheld then all Numantia.

METELLUS. Has terror maddened thee? hast thou descried nothing of the inhabitants but those carcases under the ramparts?

MARIUS. Those, O Metellus, lie scattered, although not indeed far asunder. The greater part of the soldiers and citizens, of the fathers, husbands, widows, wives, espoused, were assembled together.

METELLUS. About the altar?

MARIUS. Upon it.

METELLUS. So busy and earnest in devotion! but how all upon it?

MARIUS. It blazed under them and over them and round about them.

METELLUS. Immortal Gods! Art thou sane, Caius Marius? Thy visage is scorched: thy speech may wander after such an enterprise: thy shield burns my hand.

MARIUS. I thought it had cooled again. Why, truly, it seems[1] hot: I now feel it.

METELLUS. Wipe off those embers.

MARIUS. 'Twere better: there will be none opposite to shake them upon, for some time.

The funereal horn that sounded with such feebleness, sounded not so from the faint heart of him who blew it. Him I saw; him only of the living. Should I say it? there was another: there was one child whom its parent could not kill, could not part from. She had hidden it in her robe, I suspect; and, when the fire had reached it, either it shrieked or she did. For suddenly a cry pierced through the crackling pinewood, and something of round in figure fell from brand to brand, until it reached the pavement, at the feet of him who had blown the horn. I rushed toward him, for I wanted to hear the whole story, and felt the pressure of time. Condemn not my weakness, O Cæcilius! I wished an enemy to live an hour longer; for my orders were to explore and bring intelligence. When I gazed on him, in height almost gigantic, I wondered not that the blast of his trumpet was so weak: rather did I wonder that Famine, whose hand had indented every limb and feature, had left him any voice articulate. I rushed toward him however, ere my eyes had measured either his form or strength. He held the child against me, and staggered under it.

"Behold," he exclaimed, "the glorious ornament of a Roman triumph!"

I stood horror-stricken; when suddenly drops, as of rain, pattered down from the pyre. I looked; and many were the precious stones, many were the amulets and rings and bracelets, and other barbaric ornaments, unknown to me in form or purpose, that tinkled on the hardened and black branches, from mothers

[1] 1st ed. reads: "seems not."

and wives and betrothed maids; and some too, I can imagine, from robuster arms, things of joyance won in battle. The crowd of incumbent bodies was so dense and heavy, that neither the fire nor the smoke could penetrate upward from among them; and they sank, whole and at once, into the smouldering cavern eaten out below. He at whose neck hung the trumpet, felt this, and started.

"There is yet room," he cried, "and there is strength enough yet, both in the element and in me."

He extended his withered arms, he thrust forward the gaunt links of his throat, and upon gnarled knees, that smote each other audibly, tottered into the civic fire. It, like some hungry and strangest beast on the innermost wild of Africa, pierced, broken, prostrate, motionless, gazed at by its hunter in the impatience of glory, in the delight of awe, panted once more, and seized him.

I have seen within this hour, O Metellus! what Rome in the cycle of her triumphs will never see, what the Sun in his eternal course can never show her, what the Earth has borne but now and must never rear again for her, what Victory herself has envied her—a Numantian.

METELLUS. We shall feast to-morrow. Hope, Caius Marius, to become a tribune: trust in fortune.

MARIUS. Auguries are surer: surest of all is perseverance.

METELLUS. I hope the wine has not grown vapid in my tent: I have kept it waiting, and must now report to Scipio the intelligence of our discovery. Come after me, Caius.

MARIUS (*alone*).[1] The tribune is the discoverer! the centurion is the scout! Caius Marius must enter more Numantias. Light-hearted Cæcilius, thou mayest perhaps hereafter, and not with humbled but with exulting pride, take orders from this hand. If Scipio's words are fate, and to me they sound so, the portals of the Capitol may shake before my chariot, as my horses plunge back at the applauses of the people, and Jove in his high domicile may welcome the citizen of Arpinum.

Marius was young at the siege of Numantia, and, entering the army with no advantage of connexion, would have risen slowly; but Scipio had marked his regularity and good morals, and desirous of showing the value he placed on discipline, when he was asked who, in case of accident to him, should succeed

[1] 1st ed. reads: "MARIUS (*following*)."

in the chief command, replied, *Perhaps this man*, touching the shoulder of Marius.[1]

Caius Cæcilius Metellus was the youngest of four brothers: he served as tribune before Numantia, where Scipio said of[2] him, *Si quintum pareret mater ejus, asinum fuisse parituram.* He was the kinsman of that Metellus by whose jealousy Marius was persecuted in the Numidian war.

[1] Note in 1st ed. here inserts: "He, addicted by nature to superstition, is reported to have founded his hopes of supremacy on words intended only to encourage others in emulation."

[2] 1st ed. reads "Scipio said to him," and gives reference to Cicero, *De Orat.* 66.

IV. LUCULLUS AND CÆSAR

(*Imag. Convers.*, iv., 1829; *Wks.*, i., 1846; *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

CÆSAR. Lucius Lucullus, I come to you privately and unattended, for reasons which you will know; confiding, I dare not say in your friendship, since no service of mine toward you hath deserved it, but in your generous and disinterested love of peace. Hear me on. Cneius Pompeius, according to the report of my connexions in the city, had, on the instant of my leaving it for the province, begun to solicit his dependants to strip me ignominiously of authority. Neither vows nor affinity can bind him. He would degrade the father of his wife; he would humiliate his own children, the unoffending, the unborn; he would poison his own nascent love at the suggestion of Ambition. Matters are now brought so far, that either he or I must submit to a reverse of fortune; since no concession can assuage his malice, divert his envy, or gratify his cupidity. No sooner could I raise myself up, from the consternation and stupefaction into which the certainty of these reports had thrown me, than I began to consider in what manner my own private afflictions might become the least noxious to the republic. Into whose arms then could I throw myself more naturally and more securely, to whose bosom could I commit and consign more sacredly the hopes and destinies of our beloved country, than his who laid down power in the midst of its enjoyments, in the vigour of youth, in the pride of triumph, when Dignity solicited, when Friendship urged, entreated, supplicated, and when Liberty herself invited and beckoned to him, from the senatorial order and from the curule chair? Betrayed and abandoned by those we had confided in, our next friendship, if ever our hearts receive any, or if any will venture in those places of desolation, flies forward instinctively to what is most contrary and dissimilar. Cæsar is hence the visitant of Lucullus.

LUCULLUS. I had always thought Pompeius more moderate and

more reserved than you represent him, Caius Julius ! and yet I am considered in general, and surely you also will consider me, but little liable to be prepossessed by him.

CÆSAR. Unless he may have ingratiated himself with you recently, by the administration of that worthy whom last winter his partisans dragged before the senate, and forced to assert publicly that you and Cato had instigated a party to circumvent and murder him ; and whose carcase, a few days afterward, when it had been announced that he had died by a natural death, was found covered with bruises, stabs, and dislocations.

LUCULLUS. You bring much to my memory which had quite slipped out of it, and I wonder that it could make such an impression on yours. A proof to me that the interest you take in my behalf began earlier than your delicacy will permit you to acknowledge. You are fatigued, which I ought to have perceived before.

CÆSAR. Not at all : the fresh air has given me life and alertness : I feel it upon my cheek even in the room.

LUCULLUS. After our dinner and sleep, we will spend the remainder of the day on the subject of your visit.

CÆSAR. Those Ethiopian slaves of yours shiver with cold upon the mountain here ; and truly I myself was not insensible to the change of climate, in the way from Mutina.

What white bread ! I never found such even at Naples or Capua. This Formian wine (which I prefer to the Chian) how exquisite !

LUCULLUS. Such is the urbanity of Cæsar, even while he bites his lip with displeasure. How ! surely it bleeds ! Permit me to examine the cup.

CÆSAR. I believe a jewel has fallen out of the rim in the carriage : the gold is rough there.

LUCULLUS. Marcipor ! let me never see that cup again. No answer, I desire. My guest pardons heavier faults. Mind that dinner be prepared for us shortly.

CÆSAR. In the meantime, Lucullus, if your health permits it, shall we walk a few paces round the villa ? for I have not seen anything of the kind before.

LUCULLUS. The walls are double : the space between them two feet : the materials for the most-part earth and straw. Two hundred slaves, and about as many mules and oxen, brought the

beams and rafters up the mountain: my architects fixed them at once in their places: every part was ready, even the wooden nails. The roof is thatched, you see.

CÆSAR. Is there no danger that so light a material should be carried off by the winds, on such an eminence?

LUCULLUS. None resists them equally well.

CÆSAR. On this immensely high mountain I should be apprehensive of the lightning, which the poets, and I think the philosophers too, have told us, strikes the highest.

LUCULLUS. The poets are right; for whatever is received as truth, is truth in poetry; and a fable may illustrate like a fact. But the philosophers are wrong; as they generally are, even in the commonest things; because they seldom look beyond their own tenets, unless through captiousness; and because they argue more than they meditate, and display more than they examine.[1] Archimedes and Euclid are, in my opinion, after our Epicurus, the worthiest of the name, having kept apart to the demonstrable, the practical, and the useful. Many of the rest are good writers and good disputants; but unfaithful suitors of simple Science; boasters of their acquaintance with Gods and Goddesses; plagiarists and impostors. I[2] had forgotten my roof, although it is composed of much the same materials as the philosophers'. Let the lightning fall: one handful of silver, or less, repairs the damage.

CÆSAR. Impossible! nor indeed one thousand; nor twenty, if those tapestries * and pictures are consumed.

LUCULLUS. True; but only the thatch would burn. For before the baths were tessellated, I filled the area with alum and water, and soaked the timbers and laths for many months, and covered them afterward with alum in powder, by means of liquid glue. Mithridates taught me this. Having in vain attacked with combustibles a wooden tower, I took it by stratagem, and found within it a mass of alum, which, if a great hurry had not been observed by us among the enemy in the attempt to conceal it, would have escaped our

[1] 1st ed. reads: "examine things, because they write more attentively than they examine. Archimedes, in my opinion, is the only one worthy of the name, for he alone has kept," etc.

[2] From "I" to "philosophers'" added in 2nd ed.

* Cæsar would regard such things attentively. "In *expeditionibus* tessellata et sectitia pavimenta circumtulisse; signa, tabulas, operis antiqui, semper animosissime comparâsse," says Suetonius.—W. S. L.

notice. I never scrupled to extort the truth from my prisoners: but my instruments were purple robes and plate, and the only wheel in my armoury, destined to such purposes, was the wheel of Fortune.

CÆSAR. I wish, in my campaigns, I could have equalled your clemency and humanity: but the Gauls are more uncertain, fierce, and perfidious, than the wildest tribes of Caucasus; and our policy can not be carried with us; it must be formed upon the spot. They love you, not for abstaining from hurting them, but for ceasing; and they embrace you only at two seasons; when stripes are fresh or when stripes are imminent. Elsewhere I hope to become the rival of Lucullus in this admirable part of virtue.

I shall never build villas, because—— But what are your proportions? Surely the edifice is extremely low.

LUCULLUS. There is only one floor: the height of the apartments is twenty feet to the cornice, five above it; the breadth is twenty-five; the length forty. The building, as you perceive, is quadrangular: three sides contain four rooms each: the other has many partitions and two stories, for domestics and offices. Here is my salt-bath.

CÆSAR. A bath indeed for all the Nereids named by Hesiod, with room enough for the Tritons and their herds and horses.[1]

LUCULLUS. Next to it, where yonder boys are carrying the myrrhine vases, is a tepid one of fresh water, ready for your reception.

CÆSAR. I resign the higher pleasure for the inferior, as we all are apt to do; and I will return to the enjoyment of your conversation when I have indulged a quarter of an hour in this refreshment.

LUCULLUS. Meanwhile I will take refuge with some less elegant philosopher, whose society I shall quit again with less regret. (*Cæsar returning.*) It is useless, O Caius Julius, to inquire if there has been any negligence or any omission in the service of the bath: for these are secrets which you never impart to the most favoured of your friends.

CÆSAR. I have often enjoyed the luxury much longer, but never more highly. Pardon my impatience to see the remainder of your Apennine villa.

LUCULLUS. Here stand my two cows. Their milk is brought to me with its warmth and froth; for it loses its salubrity both by repose

[1] What follows, from "LUCULLUS. Next to it" to "Apennine villa," added in 2nd ed.

and by motion. Pardon me, Cæsar: I shall appear to you to have forgotten that I am not conducting Marcus Varro.

Cæsar. You would convert him into Cacus: he would drive them off. What beautiful beasts! how sleek and white and cleanly! I never saw any like them, excepting when we sacrifice to Jupiter the stately leader from the pastures of the Clitumnus.

Lucullus. Often do I make a visit to these quiet creatures, and with no less pleasure than in former days to my horses. Nor indeed can I much wonder that whole nations have been consentaneous in treating them as objects of devotion: the only thing wonderful is, that gratitude seems to have acted as powerfully and extensively as fear; indeed more extensively; for no object of worship whatever has attracted so many worshippers. Where Jupiter has one, the cow has ten: she was venerated before he was born, and will be when even the carvers have forgotten him.

Cæsar. Unwillingly should I see it; for the character of our Gods hath formed the character of our nation. Serapis and Isis have stolen in among them within our memory, and others will follow, until at last Saturn will not be the only one emasculated by his successor. What can be more august than our rites? The first dignitaries of the republic are emulous to administer them: nothing of low or venal has any place in them, nothing pusillanimous, nothing unsocial and austere. I speak of them as they were; before Superstition woke up again from her slumber, and caught to her bosom with maternal love the alluvial monsters of the Nile. Philosophy, never fit for the people, had entered the best houses, and the image of Epicurus had taken the place of the Lemures. But men can not bear to be deprived long together of anything they are used to; not even of their fears; and, by a reaction of the mind appertaining to our nature, new stimulants were looked for, not on the side of pleasure, where nothing new could be expected or imagined, but on the opposite. Irreligion is followed by fanaticism, and fanaticism by irreligion, alternately and perpetually.

Lucullus. The religion of our country, as you observe, is well adapted to its inhabitants. Our progenitor Mars hath Venus recumbent on his breast, and looking up to him, teaching us that pleasure is to be sought in the bosom of valour and by the means of war. No great alteration, I think, will ever be made in our rites and ceremonies; the best and most imposing that could be

collected from all nations, and uniting them to us by our complacence in adopting them. The Gods themselves may change names, to flatter new power: and indeed, as we degenerate, Religion will accommodate herself to our propensities and desires. Our heaven is now popular: it will become monarchal; not without a crowded court, as befits it, of apparitors and satellites and minions of both sexes, paid and caressed for carrying to their stern dark-bearded master prayers and supplications. Altars must be strown[1] with broken minds, and incense rise amid abject aspirations. Gods will be found unfit for their places; and it is not impossible that, in the ruin imminent from our contentions for power, and in the necessary extinction both of ancient families and of generous sentiments, our consular fasces may become the water-sprinklers of some upstart priesthood, and that my son may apply for lustration to the son of my groom. The interest of such men requires that the spirit of arms and of arts be extinguished. They will predicate peace, that the people may be tractable to them: but a religion altogether pacific is the fomenter of wars and the nurse of crimes, alluring Sloth from within and Violence from afar. If ever it should prevail among the Romans, it must prevail alone: for nations more vigorous and energetic will invade them, close upon them, trample them under foot; and the name of Roman, which is now the most glorious, will become the most opprobrious upon earth.

CÆSAR. The time I hope may be distant; for next to my own name I hold my country's.

LUCULLUS. Mine, not coming from Troy or Ida, is lower in my estimation: I place my country's first.

You are surveying the little lake beside us.[2] It contains no fish: birds never alight on it: the water is extremely pure and cold: the walk round is pleasant; not only because there is always a gentle breeze from it, but because the turf is fine, and the surface of the mountain on this summit is perfectly on a level, to a great extent in length; not a trifling advantage to me, who walk often and am weak. I have no alley, no garden, no inclosure: the park is in the vale below, where a brook supplies the ponds, and where my servants are lodged; for here I have only twelve in attendance.

CÆSAR. What is that so white, toward the Adriatic?

[1] Landor's spelling, not followed by Crump.
[2] "beside us" added in 2nd ed.

LUCULLUS. The Adriatic itself. Turn round and you may descry the Tuscan Sea. Our situation is reported to be among the highest of the Apennines—— Marcipor has made the sign to me that dinner is ready. Pass this way.

CÆSAR. What a library is here! Ah Marcus Tullius! I salute thy image. Why frownest thou upon me? collecting the consular robe and uplifting the right-arm, as when Rome stood firm again, and Catiline fled before thee.

LUCULLUS. Just so; such was the action the statuary chose, as adding a new endearment to the memory of my absent friend.

CÆSAR. Sylla, who honoured you above all men, is not here.

LUCULLUS. I have his *Commentaries:* he inscribed them, as you know, to me. Something even of our benefactors may be forgotten, and gratitude be unreproved.

CÆSAR. The impression on that couch, and the two fresh honey-suckles in the leaves of those two books, would show, even to a stranger, that this room is peculiarly the master's. Are they sacred?

LUCULLUS. To me and Cæsar.

CÆSAR. I would have asked permission——

LUCULLUS. Caius Julius, you have nothing to ask of Polybius and Thucydides; nor of Xenophon, the next to them on the table.

CÆSAR. Thucydides! the most generous,[1] the most unprejudiced, the most sagacious, of historians. Now, Lucullus, you whose judgment in style is more accurate than any other Roman's, do tell me whether a commander, desirous of writing his *Commentaries*, could take to himself a more perfect model than Thucydides.

LUCULLUS. Nothing is more perfect, nor ever will be: the scholar of Pericles, the master of Demosthenes, the equal of the one in military science, and of the other not the inferior in civil and forensic; the calm dispassionate judge of the general by whom he was defeated, his defender, his encomiast. To talk of such men is conducive not only to virtue but to health.

CÆSAR. We have no writer who could keep up long together his severity and strength. I would follow him; but I shall be contented with my genius, if (Thucydides in sight) I come many paces behind, and attain by study and attention the graceful and secure mediocrity of Xenophon.

[1] 1st ed. reads: "generous of military men; the most," etc.

LUCULLUS AND CÆSAR

LUCULLUS. You will avoid, I think, Cæsar, one of his peculiarities; his tendency to superstition.

CÆSAR. I dare promise this; and even to write nothing so flat and idle as his introduction to the *Cyropædia*. The first sentence that follows it, I perceive, repeats the same word, with its substantive, four times. This is a trifle: but great writers and great painters do miracles or mischief by a single touch. Our authors are so addicted of late to imitate the Grecian, that a bad introduction is more classical than a good one. Not to mention any friend of yours, Crispus Sallustius, who is mine, brought me one recently of this description; together with some detached pieces of a history, which nothing in our prose or poetry hath surpassed in animation.

LUCULLUS. We ought to talk of these things by ourselves; not before the vulgar; by which expression I mean the unlearned and irreverent, in forum and in senate. Our Cicero has indeed avoided such inelegance as that of Xenophon: one perhaps less pardonable may be found repeatedly in his works: I would say an inelegance not arising from neglect, or obtusity of ear, but coming forth in the absence of reflection. He often says, "*mirari soleo.*" Now surely a wise man soon ceases to wonder at anything, and, instead of indulging in the habitude of wonder at one object, brings it closer to him, makes it familiar, discusses, and dismisses it. He told me in his last letter of an incredible love and affection for me. Pardon me, Cæsar! pardon me, Genius of Rome! and Mercury! I exclaimed, "*the clown!*" laughing heartily. He would not that I should really have thought his regard *incredible;* on the contrary, that I should believe in it and confide in it to its full extent, and that I should flatter myself it was not only possible but reasonable. In vain will anyone remark to me, "*such phrases are common.*" In our ordinary language there are many beauties, more or less visible according to their place and season, which a judicious writer and forcible orator will subject to his arbitration and service: there are also many things which, if used at all, must be used cautiously. I may be much at my ease without being in tatters, and without treading on the feet of those I come forward to salute. I arrogate to myself no superiority, in detecting a peculiar and latent mark upon that exalted luminary: his own effulgence showed me it. From Cicero down to me the distance is as great, as between the prince of the

senate and the lowest voter. I influenced the friends of order; he fulminated and exterminated the enemies: I have served my country: he hath saved it.

This other is my dining-room. You expect the dishes.

CÆSAR. I misunderstood—I fancied——

LUCULLUS. Repose yourself, and touch with the ebony wand, beside you, the sphynx on either of those obelisks, right or left.

CÆSAR. Let me look at them first.

LUCULLUS. The contrivance was intended for one person, or two at most, desirous of privacy and quiet. The blocks[1] of jasper in my pair, and of porphyry in yours, easily yield in their grooves, each forming one partition. There are four, containing four platforms. The lower holds four dishes, such as sucking forest-boars, venison, hares, tunnies, sturgeons, which you will find within; the upper three, eight each, but diminutive. The confectionery is brought separately: for the steam would spoil it, if any should escape. The melons are in the snow thirty feet under us: they came early this morning from a place in the vicinity of Luni,[2] so that I hope they may be crisp, independently of their coolness.

CÆSAR. I wonder not at anything of refined elegance in Lucullus: but really here Antiochia and Alexandria seem to have cooked for us, and magicians to be our attendants.

LUCULLUS. The absence of slaves from our repast is the luxury: for Marcipor alone enters, and he only when I press a spring with my foot or wand. When you desire his appearance, touch that chalcedony, just before you.

CÆSAR. I eat quick, and rather plentifully: yet the valetudinarian (excuse my rusticity, for I rejoice at seeing it) appears to equal the traveller in appetite, and to be contented with one dish.

LUCULLUS. It is milk: such, with strawberries, which ripen on the Apennines many months in continuance, and some other berries of sharp and grateful flavour,[3] has been my only diet since my first residence here. The state of my health requires it; and the habitude of nearly three months renders this food not only more

[1] 1st ed. reads: "The apparent blocks."

[2] 1st ed. adds "by night" after "Luni," and does not include the words from "so" to "coolness."

[3] 1st ed. has a footnote as follows: "The raspberry and gooseberry are not cultivated in Italy, but grow."

commodious to my studies and more conducive to my sleep, but also more agreeable to my palate, than any other.

CÆSAR. Returning to Rome or Baiæ, you must domesticate and tame them. The cherries you introduced from Pontus are now growing in Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, and the largest and best in the world perhaps are upon the more sterile side of Lake Larius.

LUCULLUS. There are some fruits, and some virtues, which require a harsh soil and bleak exposure for their perfection.

CÆSAR. In such a profusion of viands, and so savoury, I perceive no odour.

LUCULLUS. A flue conducts heat through the compartments of the obelisks ; and if you look up, you may observe that those gilt roses, between the astragals in the cornice, are prominent from it half a span. Here is an aperture in the wall, between which and the outer is a perpetual current of air. We are now in the dog-days ; and I have never felt in the whole summer more heat than at Rome in many days of March.

CÆSAR. Usually you are attended by troops of domestics and of dinner-friends, not to mention the learned and scientific, nor your own family, your attachment to which, from youth upward, is one of the higher graces in your character. Your brother was seldom absent from you.

LUCULLUS. Marcus was coming : but the vehement heats along the Arno, in which valley he has a property he never saw before, inflamed his blood ; and he now is resting for a few days at Fæsulæ, a little town destroyed by Sylla within our memory, who left it only air and water, the best in Tuscany. The health of Marcus, like mine, has been declining for several months : we are running our last race against each other : and never was I, in youth along the Tiber, so anxious of first reaching the goal. I would not outlive him : I should reflect too painfully on earlier days, and look forward too despondently on future. As for friends, lampreys and turbots beget them, and they spawn not amid the solitude of the Apennines. To dine in company with more than two, is a Gaulish and German thing. I can hardly bring myself to believe that I have eaten in concert with twenty ; so barbarous and herdlike a practice does not now [1] appear to me : such an incentive to drink much and talk

[1] 1st and 2nd eds. read : " does it now."

loosely; not to add, such a necessity to speak loud: which is clownish and odious in the extreme. On this mountain-summit I hear no noises, no voices, not even of salutation: we have no flies about us, and scarcely an insect or reptile.

CÆSAR. Your amiable son is probably with his uncle: is he well?

LUCULLUS. Perfectly: he was indeed with my brother in his intended visit to me: but Marcus, unable to accompany him hither, or superintend his studies in the present state of his health, sent him directly to his uncle Cato at Tusculum, a man fitter than either of us to direct his education, and preferable to any, excepting yourself and Marcus Tullius, in eloquence and urbanity.

CÆSAR. Cato is so great, that whoever is greater must be the happiest and first of men.

LUCULLUS. That any such be still existing, O Julius, ought to excite no groan from the breast of a Roman citizen. But perhaps I wrong you: perhaps your mind was forced reluctantly back again, on your past animosities and contests in the senate.

CÆSAR. I revere him, but can not love him.

LUCULLUS. Then, Caius Julius, you groaned with reason; and I would pity rather than reprove you.

On the ceiling, at which you are looking, there is no gilding, and little painting—a mere trellis of vines bearing grapes, and the heads, shoulders, and arms, rising from the cornice only, of boys and girls climbing up to steal them, and scrambling for them: nothing over-head: no giants tumbling down, no Jupiter thundering, no Mars and Venus caught at mid-day, no river-gods pouring out their urns upon us: for, as I think nothing so insipid as a flat ceiling, I think nothing so absurd as a storied one. Before I was aware, and without my participation, the painter had adorned that of my bed-chamber with a golden shower, bursting from varied and irradiated clouds. On my expostulation, his excuse was, that he knew the Danaë of Scopas, in a recumbent posture, was to occupy the centre of the room. The walls, behind the tapestry and pictures, are quite rough. In forty-three days the whole fabric was put together and habitable.

The wine has probably lost its freshness: will you try some other?

CÆSAR. Its temperature is exact [1]; its flavour exquisite. Latterly

[1] 1st ed. reads "admirable" for "exact," and "incomparable" for "exquisite."

I have never sat long after dinner, and am curious to pass through the other apartments, if you will trust me.

LUCULLUS. I attend you.

CÆSAR. Lucullus ! who is here ? what figure is that on the poop of the vessel ? can it be——

LUCULLUS. The subject was dictated by myself ; you gave it.

CÆSAR. Oh how beautifully is the water painted ! how vividly the sun strikes against the snows on Taurus ! the grey temples and pier-head of Tarsus catch it differently, and the monumental mound on the left is half in shade. In the countenance of those pirates I did not observe such diversity, nor that any boy pulled his father back : I did not indeed mark them or notice them at all.

LUCULLUS. The painter in this fresco, the last work finished, had dissatisfied me in one particular. "That beautiful young face," said I, "appears not to threaten death."

"Lucius," he replied, "if one muscle were moved, it were not Cæsar's : beside, he said it jokingly, though resolved."

"I am contented with your apology, Antipho : but what are you doing now ? for you never lay down or suspend your pencil, let who will talk and argue. The lines of that smaller face in the distance are the same."

"Not the same," replied he, "nor very different : it smiles : as surely the Goddess must have done, at the first heroic act of her descendant."

CÆSAR. In her exultation and impatience to press forward, she seems to forget that she is standing at the extremity of the shell, which rises up behind out of the water ; and she takes no notice of the terror on the countenance of this Cupid who would detain her, nor of this who is flying off and looking back. The reflection of the shell has given a warmer hue below the knee : a long streak of yellow light in the horizon is on the level of her bosom ; some of her hair is almost lost in it : above her head on every side is the pure azure of the heavens.[1]

O ! and you would not have led me up to this ? You, among whose primary studies is the most perfect satisfaction of your guests.

[1] 1st ed. reads : "heavens. I have read the picture ; and thus it ends. Oh ! and you would not have shewn me this ? You," etc.

LUCULLUS.[1] In the next apartment are seven or eight other pictures from our history.

There are no more: what do you look for?

CÆSAR. I find not among the rest any descriptive of your own exploits. Ah Lucullus! there is no surer way of making them remembered.[2]

This, I presume by the harps in the two corners, is the music-room.

LUCULLUS. No indeed; nor can I be said to have one here: for I love best the music of a single instrument, and listen to it willingly at all times, but most willingly while I am reading. At such seasons a voice or even a whisper disturbs me: but music refreshes my brain when I have read long, and strengthens it from the beginning. I find also that if I write anything in poetry (a youthful propensity still remaining) it gives rapidity and variety and brightness to my ideas. On ceasing, I command a fresh measure and instrument, or another voice; which is to the mind like a change of posture or of air to the body. My health is benefited by the gentle play thus opened to the most delicate of the fibres.

CÆSAR. Let me augur that a disorder so tractable may be soon removed. What is it thought to be?

LUCULLUS. There are they who would surmise and signify, and my physician did not long attempt to persuade me of the contrary, that the ancient realms of Æætes have supplied me with some other plants than the cherry, and such as I should be sorry to see domesticated here in Italy.

CÆSAR. The Gods forbid! Anticipate better things. The reason of Lucullus is stronger than the medicaments of Mithridates; but why not use them too? Let nothing be neglected. You may reasonably hope for many years of life: your mother still enjoys it.*

LUCULLUS. To stand upon one's guard against Death, exasperates her malice and protracts our sufferings.

CÆSAR. Rightly and gravely said: but your country at this time can not do well without you.

LUCULLUS. The bowl of milk which to-day is presented to me, will shortly be presented to my Manes.

[1] 1st ed. reads: "LUCULLUS. This is the only one in fresco; but in the next," etc.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "remembered: the soul of them is here. This," etc.

* Cicero relates that he went from his villa to attend her funeral a few years afterward.—W. S. L.

CÆSAR. Do you suspect the hand?

LUCULLUS. I will not suspect a Roman: let us converse no more about it.

CÆSAR. It is the only subject on which I am resolved never to think, as relates to myself. Life may concern us, death not; for in death we neither can act nor reason, we neither can persuade nor command; and our statues are worth more than we are, let them be but wax. Lucius, I will not divine your thoughts: I will not penetrate into your suspicions, nor suggest mine. I am lost in admiration of your magnanimity and forbearance; that your only dissimulation should be upon the guilt of your assassin; that you should leave him power, and create him virtues.

LUCULLUS. Caius Julius, if I can assist you in anything you meditate, needful or advantageous to our country, speak it unreservedly.

CÆSAR. I really am ashamed of my association with Crassus and Pompeius: I would not have anything in common with them, not even power itself. Unworthy and ignominious must it appear to you, as it does to me, to compromise with an auctioneer and a rope-dancer; for the meanness and venality of Crassus, the levity and tergiversation of Pompeius, leave them no better names. The bestiality of the one, the infidelity of the other, urge and inflame me with an inextinguishable desire of uniting my authority to yours for the salvation of the republic.

LUCULLUS. I foretold to Cicero, in the words of Lucretius [1] on the dissolution of the world,

Tria talia texta
Una dies dabit exitio.

CÆSAR. Assist me in accomplishing your prophecy: or rather, accept my assistance: for I would more willingly hear a proposal from you than offer one. Reflections must strike you, Lucullus, no less forcibly than me, and perhaps more justly; you are calmer. Consider all the late actions of Cneius, and tell me who has ever committed any so indecorous with so grave a face? He abstained in great measure from the follies of youth, only to reserve them accumulated for maturer age. Human life, if I may venture to speak fancifully in your presence, hath its equinoxes.[2] In the vernal its

[1] Lucr., v. 95. [2] 1st ed. reads: "its vernal equinox; its first flowers," etc.

flowers open under violent tempests: in the autumnal it is more exempt from gusts and storms, more regular, serene, and temperate, looks complacently on the fruits it has gathered, on the harvests it has reaped, and is not averse to the graces of order, to the avocations of literature, to the genial warmth of honest conviviality, and to the mild necessity of repose. Thrown [1] out from the course of nature, this man stood aside and solitary, and found everything around him unattractive. And now, in the decline of life, he has recourse to those associates, of whom the best that can be said is, that they would have less disgraced its outset. Repulsing you and Cicero and Cato, the leaders of his party and the propagators of his power, Pompeius the Great takes the arm of Clodius, and walks publicly with him in the forum; who nevertheless the other day headed a chorus (I am informed) of the most profligate and opprobrious youths in Rome, and sang responsively worse than Fescennine songs to his dishonour. Where was he? Before them? in court? defending a client? He came indeed with that intention; but sat mortified, speechless, and despondent. The senate connived at the indignity. Even Gabinius, his flatterer and dependant, shuns him. The other consul is alienated from him totally, and favours me through Calpurnia, who watches over my security and interests at home. Julia my daughter was given in marriage to Pompeius for this purpose only: she fails to accomplish it: politically then and morally, the marriage loses its validity by losing its intent. I go into Gaul, commander for five years: Crassus is preparing for an expedition against the Parthians: the senate and people bend before Pompeius, but reluctantly and indignantly. Everything would be more tolerable to me, if I could permit him to boast that he had duped me: but my glory requires that, letting him choose his own encampment, square the declivities, clear the ground about the eminence, foss and pale it, I should storm and keep it. Whatever he may boast of his eloquence and military skill, I fear nothing from the orator who tells us what he would have spoken, nor from the general who sees what he should have done. My first proposal for accommodation and concord shall be submitted to you (if indeed you will not frame it for me), and should you deem it unfair shall be suppressed. No successive step shall be made by me without your concurrence: in short, I am inclined to take up any

[1] From "Thrown" to "outset" added in 2nd ed.

line of conduct, in conjunction with you, for the settling of the commonwealth. Does the proposal seem to you so unimportant on the one hand, or so impracticable and unreasonable on the other, that you smile and shake your head?

LUCULLUS. Cæsar! Cæsar! you write upon language and analogy; no man better. Tell me then whether mud is not said to be settled when it sinks to the bottom? and whether those who are about to sink a state, do not in like manner talk of settling it?

CÆSAR. I wish I had time to converse with you on language, or skill to parry your reproofs with equal wit; for serious you can not be. At present let us remove what is bad; which must always be done before good of any kind can spring up.

The designs of Cneius are suspected by many in the senate, and his pride is obnoxious to all. Your party would prevail against him; for he has enriched fewer adherents than you have; and even his best friends are for the most-part in a greater degree yours.

LUCULLUS. I have enriched no adherents, Caius Julius. Many of my officers, it is true, are easy in their circumstances: they however gained their wealth, not from the plunder of our confederates, not from those who should enjoy with security their municipal rights and paternal farms in Italy, but from the enemy's camps and cities.

CÆSAR. We two might appease the public mind, preparing the leaders of the senate for our labours, and intimidating the factious.

LUCULLUS. Hilarity never forsakes you, Cæsar! and you are the happiest man upon earth in the facility with which you communicate it. Hear me, and believe me. I am about to mount higher than triumviral tribunal or than triumphal car. They who are under me will turn their faces from me; such are the rites: but not a voice of reproach or of petulance shall be heard, when the trumpets tell our city that the funereal flames are surmounting the mortal spoils of Lucullus.

CÆSAR. Mildest and most equitable of men! I have been much wronged; would you also wrong me? Lucius, you have forced from me a tear before the time. I weep at magnanimity; which no man does who wants it.

LUCULLUS. Why can not you enjoy the command of your province, and the glory of having quelled so many nations?

CÆSAR. I can not bear the superiority of another.

LUCULLUS. The weakest of women feel so; but even the weakest

of them are ashamed to acknowledge it: who hath ever heard any one? Have *you*,[1] who know them widely and well? Poetasters and mimes, labouring under such infirmity, put the mask on. You pursue glory: the pursuit is just and rational; but reflect that statuaries and painters have represented heroes calm and quiescent, not straining and panting like pugilists and gladiators.

From being for ever in action, for ever in contention, and from excelling in them all other mortals, what advantage derive we? I would not ask what satisfaction? what glory? The insects have more activity than ourselves, the beasts more strength, even inert matter more firmness and stability; the Gods alone more goodness. To the exercise of this every country lies open: and neither I eastward nor you westward have found any exhausted by contests for it.

Must we give men blows because they will not look at us? or chain them to make them hold the balance evener?

Do not expect to be acknowledged for what you are, much less for what you would be; since no one can well measure a great man but upon the bier. There was a time when the most ardent friend to Alexander of Macedon would have embraced the partisan for his enthusiasm, who should have compared him with Alexander of Pheræ. It must have been at a splendid feast, and late at it, when Scipio should have been raised to an equality with Romulus, or Cato [2] with Curius. It has been whispered in my ear, after a speech of Cicero, "If he goes on so, he will tread down the sandal of Marcus Antonius in the long run, and [3] perhaps leave Hortensius behind." Officers of mine, speaking about you, have exclaimed with admiration, "He fights like Cinna." Think, Caius Julius! (for you have been instructed to think both as a poet and as a philosopher) that among the hundred hands of Ambition, to whom we may attribute them more properly than to Briareus, there is not one which holds anything firmly. In the precipitancy of her course, what appears great is small, and what appears small is great. Our estimate of men is apt to be as inaccurate and inexact as that of things, or more. Wishing to have all on our side, we often leave those we should keep by us, run after those we should avoid, and call importunately

[1] 1st ed. reads: "not you."
[2] 1st ed. reads: "the elder Cato with Curius, or the younger with him."
[3] From "and" to "behind" added in 2nd ed.

on others who sit quiet and will not come. We can not at once catch the applause of the vulgar and expect the approbation of the wise. What are parties? Do men really great ever enter into them? Are they not ball-courts, where ragged adventurers strip and strive, and where dissolute youths abuse one another, and challenge and game and wager? If you and I can not quite divest ourselves of infirmities and passions, let us think however that there is enough in us to be divided into two portions, and let us keep the upper undisturbed and pure. A part of Olympus itself lies in dreariness and in clouds, variable and stormy; but it is not the highest: there the Gods govern. Your soul is large enough to embrace your country: all other affection is for less objects, and less men are capable of it. Abandon, O Cæsar! such thoughts and wishes as now agitate and propel you: leave them to mere men of the marsh, to fat hearts and miry intellects. Fortunate may we call ourselves to have been born in an age so productive of eloquence, so rich in erudition. Neither of us would be excluded, or hooted at, on canvassing for these honours. He who can think dispassionately and deeply as I do, is great as I am; none other: but his opinions are at freedom to diverge from mine, as mine are from his; and indeed, on recollection, I never loved those most who thought with me, but those rather who deemed my sentiments worth discussion, and who corrected me with frankness and affability.

Cæsar. Lucullus! you perhaps have taken the wiser and better part, certainly the pleasanter. I can not argue with you: I would gladly hear one who could, but you again more gladly. I should think unworthily of you if I thought you capable of yielding or receding. I do not even ask you to keep our conversation long a secret; so greatly does it preponderate in your favour; so much more of gentleness, of eloquence, and of argument. I came hither with one soldier, avoiding the cities, and sleeping at the villa of a confidential friend. To-night I sleep in yours, and, if your dinner does not disturb me, shall sleep soundly. You go early to rest, I know.

Lucullus. Not however by daylight. Be assured, Caius Julius, that greatly as your discourse afflicts me, no part of it shall escape my lips. If you approach the city with arms, with arms I meet you; then your denouncer and enemy, at present your host and confidant.

CÆSAR. I shall conquer you.

LUCULLUS. That smile would cease upon it: you sigh already.

CÆSAR. Yes, Lucullus, if I am oppressed I shall overcome my oppressor: I know my army and myself. A sigh escaped me; and many more will follow: but one transport will rise amid them, when, vanquisher of my enemies and avenger of my dignity, I press again the hand of Lucullus, mindful of this day.

V. MARCUS TULLIUS AND QUINCTUS CICERO

(*Imag. Convers.*, ii., 1824; ii., 1826; *Wks.*, i., 1846; *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

MARCUS. The last calamities of our country, my brother Quinctus, have again united us; and something like the tenderness of earlier days appears to have returned, in the silence of ambition and in the subsidence of hope. It has frequently occurred to me how different we [1] are from the moment when the parental roof bursts asunder, as it were, and the inmates are scattered abroad, and build up here and there new families. Many, who before lived in amity and concord, are then in the condition of those who, receiving intelligence of a [2] shipwreck, collect at once for plunder, and quarrel on touching the first fragment.

QUINCTUS. We never disagreed on the division of any property, unless indeed the state and its honours may be considered as such; and although in regard to Cæsar, our fortune drew us different ways latterly,[3] and my gratitude made me, until your remonstrances and prayers prevailed, reluctant to abandon him, you will remember my anxiety to procure you the consulate and the triumph. You [4] can not and never could suppose me unmindful of the signal benefits and high distinctions I have received from Cæsar, or quite unreluctant to desert an army, for my services in which he often praised me to you, while I was in Britain and in Gaul. Such moreover was his generosity, he did not erase my name from his *Commentaries*, for having abandoned and opposed his cause. My joy therefore ought not to be unmingled at his violent death, to whom I am indebted not only for confidence and command, not only for advancement and glory, but also for immortality. When you yourself had resolved on leaving Italy to follow Cneius Pompeius, you were sensible, as you

[1] 1st ed. reads: "we all are."
[2] 1st ed. reads: "some shipwreck on the shore, collect together busily."
[3] 1st ed. reads: "latterly, you will remember my anxiety."
[4] From "You" to "amicable" added in 2nd ed.

told me, that my obligations to Cæsar should at least detain me in Italy. Our disputes, which among men who reason will be frequent, were always amicable: our political views have always been similar, and generally the same. You indeed were somewhat more aristocratical and senatorial; and this prejudice hath ruined both. As if the immortal Gods took a pleasure in confounding us by the difficulty of our choice, they placed the best men at the head of the worst cause. Decimus Brutus and Porcius Cato held up the train of Sylla; for the late civil wars were only a continuation of those which the old dictator seemed, for a time, to have extinguished in blood and ruins. His faction was in authority when you first appeared at Rome; and although among your friends and sometimes in public, you have spoken as a Roman should speak of Caius Marius, a respect for Pompeius, the most insincere of mortals, made you silent on the merits of Sertorius; than whom there never was a better man in private life, a magistrate more upright, a general more vigilant, a citizen more zealous for the prerogative of our republic. Caius Cæsar, the later champion of the same party, overcame difficulties almost equally great, and having acted upon a more splendid theatre, may perhaps appear a still greater character.

MARCUS. He will seem so to those only who place temperance and prudence, fidelity and patriotism, aside from the component parts of greatness. Cæsar, of all men, knew best when to trust fortune: Sertorius never trusted her at all, nor ever marched a step along a path he had not patiently and well explored.[1] The best of Romans slew the one, the worst the other. The death of Cæsar was that which the wise and virtuous would most deprecate for themselves[2] and for their children; that of Sertorius what they would most desire. And since, Quinctus, we have seen the ruin of our country, and her enemies are intent on ours, let us be grateful that the last years of life have neither been useless nor inglorious, and that it is likely to close, not under the condemnation of such citizens as Cato and Brutus, but as Lepidus and Antonius. It is with more sorrow than asperity that I reflect on Caius Cæsar. O! had his heart been unambitious as his style, had he been as prompt to succour his country as to enslave her, how great, how incomparably great, were he! Then perhaps at this hour, O Quinctus, and in this villa, we should

[1] 1st ed. reads: "path he had not explored."
[2] 1st ed. reads: "themselves and their children."

have enjoyed his humorous and erudite discourse [1]; for no man ever tempered so seasonably and so justly the materials of conversation. How graceful was he! how unguarded! His whole character was uncovered; as we represent the bodies of heroes and of Gods. Two [2] years ago, at this very season, on the third of the Saturnalia, he came hither spontaneously and unexpectedly to dine with me; and although one of his attendants read to him, as he desired while he was bathing, the verses on him and Mamurra, he retained his usual good-humour, and discoursed after dinner on many points of literature, with admirable ease and judgment. Him I shall see again; and, while he acknowledges my justice, I shall acknowledge [3] his virtues, and contemplate them unclouded. I shall see again our father, and Mutius Scævola, and you, and our sons, and the ingenuous and faithful Tyro. He alone has power over my life, if any has; for to him I confide my writings. And our worthy Marcus Brutus will meet me, whom I would [4] embrace among the first: for, if I have not done him an injury, I have caused him one. Had I never lived, or had I never excited his envy, he might perhaps have written as I have done; but for the sake of avoiding me he caught both cold and fever. Let us pardon him; let us love him. With a weakness that injured his eloquence, and with a softness of soul that sapped the constitution of our state, he is no unworthy branch of that family which will be remembered the longest among men.

O happy day, when I shall meet my equals, and when my inferiors shall trouble me no more!

Man thinks it miserable to be cut off in the midst of his projects: he should rather think it miserable to have formed them. For the one is his own action, the other is not; the one was subject from the beginning to disappointments and vexations, the other ends them. And what truly is that period of life in which we are not in the midst of our projects? They spring up only the more rank and wild, year after year, from their extinction or change of form, as herbage from the corruption and dying down of herbage.

I will not dissemble that I upheld the senatorial cause for no other reason than that my dignity was to depend on it. My [5] first enthusiasm was excited by Marius; my first poem was written on

[1] Cicero, *Ad. Att.*, xiii. [2] From "Two" to "judgment" added in 2nd ed.
[3] 1st ed. reads: "all his virtues." [4] 1st ed. reads: "will."
[5] From "My" to "close connexions" added in 3rd ed.

him. We were proud of him as a fellow-citizen of Arpinum. Say no more of him. It is only the most generous nature that grows more generous by age: Marius, like Pompeius, grew more and more austere. I praised his exploits in the enthusiasm of youth and poetry; either of which is sufficient excuse for many errors; and both together may extort somewhat more than pardon, when valour in a fellow-townsman is the exciter of our praise. But, sitting now in calmer judgment, we see him stripped of his victorious arms and sevenfold consulship; we see him in his native rudeness, selfishness, and ferocity; we see him the murderer of his colleague in the consulship, of his comrade in the camp. Scarcely can we admire even the severity of his morals, when its principal use was to enforce the discipline needful to the accomplishment of his designs.

QUINCTUS. Marius is an example that a liberal education is peculiarly necessary where power is almost unlimited. Quiet, social, philosophical intercourse, can alone restrict that tendency to arrogance which war encourages, and alone can inculcate that abstinence from wrong and spoliation which we have lately seen exercised more intemperately than even by Marius or by Sylla, and carried into the farms and villas of ancient friends and close connexions.

MARCUS. Had the party[1] of our townsman been triumphant, and the senate (as it would have been) abolished, I should never have had a Catilinarian conspiracy to quell, and few of my best orations would have been delivered.

QUINCTUS. Do you believe that the Marian faction would have annulled your[2] order?

MARCUS. I believe that their safety would have required its ruin, and that their vengeance, not to say their equity, would have accomplished it. The civil war was of the senate against the equestrian order and the people, and was maintained by the wealth of the patricians, accumulated in the time of Sylla, from the proscription of all whom violence made, or avarice called, its adversaries. It would have been necessary to confiscate the whole property of the order, and to banish its members from Italy. Any measures short of these

[1] 1st ed. reads: "opposite party," and "delivered. Without a senate what Verres? QUINCTUS," etc. Wheeler suggests the alterations were due to a criticism in the *Quarterly Review*, lviii.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "our."

would have been inadequate to compensate the people for their losses; nor would there have been a sufficient pledge for the maintenance of tranquillity. The exclusion of three hundred families from their estates, which they had acquired in great part by rapine, and their expulsion from a country which they had inundated with blood, would have prevented that partition-treaty, whereby are placed in the hands of three men the properties and lives of all.

There should in no government be a contrariety of interests. Checks are useful: but it is better to stand in no need of them. Bolts and bars are good things: but would you establish a college of thieves and robbers to try how good they are? Misfortune has taught me many truths, which a few years ago I should have deemed suspicious and dangerous. The fall of Rome and of Carthage, the form of whose governments was almost the same, has been occasioned by the divisions of the ambitious in their senates: for we Conscript Fathers call that ambition which the lower ranks call avarice. In fact the only difference is, that the one wears fine linen, the other coarse; one covets the government of Asia, the other a cask [1] of vinegar. The people were indifferent which side prevailed, until their houses in that country were reduced to ashes; in this, were delivered to murderers and gamesters.

QUINCTUS. Painful is it to reflect, that the greatness of most [2] men originates from what has been taken by fraud or violence out of the common stock. The greatness of states, on the contrary, depends on the subdivision of property, chiefly of the landed, in moderate [3] portions; on the frugal pay of functionaries,[4] chiefly of those who possess a property; and on unity of interests and designs.[5] Where provinces are allotted, not for the public service, but for the enrichment of private families, where consuls wish one thing and tribunes wish another, how can there be prosperity or safety? If Carthage, whose government (as you observe) much resembled ours, had allowed the same rights generally [6] to the inhabitants of Africa; had she been as zealous in civilising as in coercing them; she would have ruined our commonwealth and ruled the world. Rome found the rest of Italy more cultivated than herself, but corrupted for the greater part by luxury, ignorant of military science, and more patient

[1] 1st ed. reads: "flask."

[2] 1st ed. reads: "nearly all."

[3] 1st ed. reads: "very moderate."

[4] 1st ed. reads: "all functionaries."

[5] 1st ed. reads: "designs in all classes."

[6] 1st ed. reads: "rights to all."

of slavery than of toil. She conquered; and in process of time infused into them somewhat of her spirit, and imparted to them somewhat of her institutions. Nothing was then wanting to her policy, but only to grant voluntarily what she might have foreseen they would unite to enforce, and to have constituted a social body in Italy. This would have rendered her invincible. Ambition would not permit our senators to divide with others the wealth and aggrandisement arising from authority: and hence our worst citizens are become our rulers. The same error was committed by Sertorius, from purer principles, when he created a senate in Spain, but admitted no Spaniard. The practice of disinterestedness, the force of virtue, in despite of so grievous an affront, united to him the bravest and most honourable of nations. If he had granted to them what was theirs by nature, and again due for benefits, he would have had nothing else to regret, than that they had so often broken our legions, and covered our commanders with shame.

What [1] could be expected in our country, where the aristocracy possessed in the time of Sylla more than half the land, and disposed of all the revenues and offices arising from our conquests? It would be idle to remark that the armies were paid out of them, when those armies were but the household of the rich, and necessary to their safety. On such reasoning there is no clear profit, no property, no possession: we can not eat without a cook, without a husbandman, without a butcher: these take a part of our money. The armies were no less the armies of the aristocracy than the money that paid and the provinces that supplied them; no less, in short, than their beds and bolsters.

Why could not we have done from policy and equity what has been and often will be done, under another name, by favour and injustice? On the agrarian law we never were unanimous: yet Tiberius Gracchus had among the upholders of his plan the most prudent, the most equitable, and the most dignified in the republic: Lælius, the friend of Scipio, whose wisdom and moderation you have lately extolled in your dialogue; Crassus, then Pontifex Maximus; and Appius Claudius, who resolved by this virtuous and patriotic deed to wipe away the stain left for ages on his family, by its licentiousness, pride, and tyranny. To these names another must be added; a name which we have been taught from our youth upward

[1] From "What" to "perishes by chalk or charcoal" added in 2nd ed.

to hold in reverence, the greatest of our jurists, Mutius Scævola. The adversaries of the measure can not deny the humanity and liberality of its provisions, by which those who might be punished for violating the laws should be indemnified for the loss of the possessions they held illegally, and these possessions should be distributed among the poorer families; not for the purpose of corrupting their votes, but that they should have no temptation to sell them.

You smile, Marcus!

MARCUS. For this very thing the Conscript Fathers were inimical to Tiberius Gracchus, and accused him of an attempt to introduce visionary and impracticable changes into the commonwealth. Among the elder of his partisans some were called ambitious, some prejudiced; among the younger, some were madmen, the rest traitors; just as they were protected or unprotected by the power of their families or the influence of their friends.

QUINCTUS. The most equitable and necessary law promulgated of latter times in our republic, was that by Caius Gracchus, who, finding all our magistratures in the disposal of the senate, and witnessing the acquittal of all criminals whose peculations and extortions had ruined our provinces and shaken our dominion, transferred the judicial power to the equestrian order. Cepio's law,[1] five-and-twenty years afterward, was an infringement of this; and the oration of Lucius Crassus in its favour, bearing with it the force of genius and the stamp of authority, formed in great measure, as you acknowledge, both your politics and your eloquence. The intimacy of Crassus with Aculeo, the husband of our maternal aunt, inclined you perhaps to follow the more readily his opinions, and to set a higher value, than you might otherwise have done, on his celebrated oration.

MARCUS. You must remember, my brother, that I neither was nor professed myself to be adverse to every agrarian law, though I opposed with all my energy and authority that agitated by Rullus. On which occasion I represented the two Gracchi as most excellent men, inflamed by the purest love of the Roman people, in their proposal to divide among the citizens what was unquestionably their due. I mentioned them as those on whose wisdom and institutions many of the solider parts in our government were erected; and I

[1] Crump points out Landor here forgot that the controversy had developed further at the date of this Conversation.

opposed the particular law at that time laid before the people, as leading to the tyranny of a decemvirate. The projects of Cæsar and Pompeius on this business were unjust and pernicious; those of Gracchus I now acknowledge to have been equitable to the citizens and salutary to the state. Unless I made you this concession, how could I defend my own conduct a few months ago, in persuading the senate to distribute among the soldiers of the fourth legion and the legion of Mars, for their services to the republic, those lands in Campania which Cæsar and Pompeius would have allotted in favour of their partisans in usurpation? Caius Gracchus on the contrary would look aside to no advantage or utility; and lost the most powerful of his friends, adherents, and relatives, by his inflexible rectitude. Beside those letters of his which are published, I remember one in answer to his mother, which Scævola was fond of quoting, and of which he possessed the original.

Quinctus. Have we the transcript of it?

Marcus. The words of Cornelia, as well as I can recollect them, are these:

"I have received the determination of Lælius and Scipio, in which they agree, as usual. He tells me that he never shall cease to be the advocate of so righteous a cause, if you will consent that the soldiers, who subdued for our republic the cities of Carthage and Numantia, shall partake in the public benefit. That Scipio is well aware how adverse the proposal would render the senate to him; and at the same time how unpopular he shall be among his fellow-citizens at Rome, which may excite a suspicion in bad and thoughtless men that he would gratify the army in defiance of each authority. He requests you to consider that these soldiers are for the greater part somewhat elderly; and that granting them possessions, on which they may sit down and rest, can not be the means an ambitious man would take for his aggrandisement. He wishes to render them inclined to peace, not alert for disturbances, and as good citizens as they have been good soldiers; and he entreats you, by the sanctity of your office, not to deprive them of what they should possess in common with others, for no better reason than because they defended by their valour the property of all. If you assent to this proposal, it will be unnecessary for him, he says, to undertake the settlement of the Commonwealth, referred to him by the senate, not without danger, my dear Caius, though rather to his life than to his dignity. So desirable a measure,

he adds, ought never to be carried into effect, nor supported too pertinaciously, by the general of an army."

QUINCTUS. I never knew of this letter. Scævola, I imagine, would not give it out of his hands for anyone to read, in public or at home. Do you remember as much of the answer?

MARCUS. I think I may do: for the language of the Gracchi was among my exercises: and I wonder that you have not heard me rehearse both pieces, in the practice of declamation. Caius answers his mother thus:

"Mother, until you have exerted your own eloquence to persuade me, if indeed you participate in the opinions of Lælius, never shall I agree that the soldiers of Scipio have an allotment of land in Italy. When we withdraw our veterans from Spain and Africa, barbarian kings will tread upon our footsteps, efface the traces of our civilization, and obliterate the memorials of our glory. The countries will be useful to us: even if they never were to be, we must provide against their becoming injurious and pernicious, as they would be under any other power. Either we should not fight an enemy, or we should fight until we have overcome him. Afterward to throw away what we have taken, is the pettishness of a child; to drop it is the imbecility of a suckling. Nothing of wantonness or frowardness is compatible with warfare, or congenial with the Roman character. To relinquish a conquest is an acknowledgment of injustice, or incapacity, or fear.

"Our soldiers, under the command of Scipio, have subdued two countries, of a soil more fertile than ours, and become by a series of battles, and by intestine discord, less populous: let them divide and enjoy it. The beaten should always pay the expenses of the war, and the instigators should be deprived of their possessions and their lives. Which, I pray you, is the more reasonable; that the Roman people shall incur debts by having conquered, or that the weight of those debts shall fall totally on the vanquished? Either the war was unjust against *them*, or the conditions of peace against *us*. Our citizens are fined and imprisoned (since their debts begin with fine and end with imprisonment) for having hurt them. What! shall we strike and run away? or shall our soldier, when he hath stripped the armour from his adversary, say, 'No, I will not take this: I will go to Rome, and suit myself with better!'

"Let the army be compensated for its toils and perils: let it

enjoy the fruit of its triumph on the soil that bore them: for never will any new one keep the natives in such awe. Those who fight for slavery should at all events have it: they should be sold as bondmen. The calamities of Carthage and of Numantia strike the bosom even of the conqueror. How many brave, how many free, how many wise and virtuous, perished within their walls! But the petty princes and their satellites should be brought to market: not one of them should have a span of earth, or a vest, or a carcase of his own. Spaniards and Africans, who prefer the domination of a tetrarch to the protection of the laws, ought to be sold for the benefit of our legionaries in Spain and Africa, whether by the gang or the dozen, whether for the mine or the arena. While any such are in existence, and while their country, of which they are unworthy, opens regions unexplored before us and teeming with fertility, I will not permit that the victorious army partake in the distribution of our home domains. Write this to Lælius; and write it for Scipio's information, imploring him so to act as that he never may enfeeble the popular voice, nor deaden the world's applause. Remind him, O mother, for we both love him, how little it would become a good citizen and brave soldier, to raise up any cause why he should have to guard himself against the suspicions and stratagems of the senate."

QUINCTUS. The attempt to restore the sounder of our institutions, was insolently and falsely called innovation. For, from the building of our city, a part of the conquered lands was sold by auction *under the spear;* an expression which hath since been used to designate the same transaction within the walls; another part was holden in common: a third was leased out at an easy rate to the poorer citizens. So that formerly the lower and intermediate class possessed by right the exclusive benefit of *two-thirds*, and an equal chance (wherever there was industry and frugality) of the other. Latterly, by various kinds of vexation and oppression, they had been deprived of nearly the whole.

Cornelia was not a woman of a heart so sickly tender as to awaken its sympathies at all hours, and to excite and pamper in it a false appetite. Like the rest of her family, she cared little or nothing for the applauses and opinions of the people: she loved justice: and it was on justice that she wished her children to lay the foundation of their glory. This ardour was inextinguished in her by the blood of her eldest son. She saw his name placed where

she wished it ; and she pointed it out to Caius. Scandalous words may be written on the wall under it, by dealers in votes and traffickers in loyalty ; but little is the worth of a name that perishes by chalk or charcoal.[1]

MARCUS. The moral, like the physical body, hath not always the same wants in the same degree. We put off or on a greater or less quantity of clothes according to the season ; and it is to the season that we must accommodate ourselves in government, wherein there are only a few leading principles which are never to be disturbed. I now perceive that the laws of society in one thing resemble the laws of perspective : they require that what is below should rise gradually, and that what is above should descend in the same proportion, but not that they should touch. Still less do they inform us, what is echoed in our ears by new masters from camp and schoolroom, that the wisest and best should depend on the weakest and worst ; and that, when individuals, however ignorant of moral discipline and impatient of self-restraint, are deemed adequate to the management of their affairs at twenty years, a state should never be ; that boys should come out of pupilage, that men should return to it ; that people in their actions and abilities so contemptible as the triumvirate, should become by their own appointment our tutors and guardians, and shake their scourges over Marcus Brutus, Marcus Varro, Marcus Tullius. The Romans are hastening back, I see, to the government of hereditary[2] kings, whether by that name or another is immaterial, which no virtuous and dignified man, no philosopher of whatever sect, hath recommended, approved, or tolerated ; and than which no moralist, no fabulist, no visionary, no poet, satirical or comic, no Fescennine jester, no dwarf or eunuch (the most privileged of privileged classes), no runner at the side of a triumphal car, in the uttermost extravagance of his licentiousness, has imagined anything more absurd, more indecorous, or more insulting. What else indeed is the reason why a nation is called barbarous by the Greeks and us ? This alone stamps the character upon it, standing for whatever is monstrous, for whatever is debased.

What a shocking sight should we consider an old father of a family led in chains along the public street, with boys and prostitutes shouting after him ! and should we not retire from it quickly and anxiously ? A sight greatly more shocking now presents itself : an

[1] End of passage added in 2nd ed. [2] 1st ed. reads : "absolute."

ancient nation is reduced to slavery, by those who vowed before the people and before the altars to defend her. And is it hard for us, O Quinctus, to turn away our eyes from this abomination? or is it necessary for a Gaul or an Illyrian to command us that we close them on it?

QUINCTUS.[1] No, Marcus, no. Let us think upon it as our forefathers always thought, and our friends lately.

MARCUS. I am your host, my brother, and must recall you awhile to pleasanter ideas. How beautiful is this Formian coast! how airy this villa! Ah, whither have I beckoned [2] your reflections! it is the last of ours perhaps we may ever see. Do you remember the races of our children along the sands, and their consternation when Tyro cried "*the Læstrygons! the Læstrygons!*" He little thought he prophesied in his mirth, and all that poetry has feigned of these monsters should in so few years be accomplished. The other evening, an hour or two before sunset, I sailed quietly along the coast, for there was little wind, and the stillness on shore made my heart faint within me. I remembered how short a time ago I had conversed with Cato around the villa of Lucullus, whose son, such was the modesty of the youth, followed rather than accompanied us. O [3] Gods! how little then did I foresee or apprehend that the guardianship of this young man, and also of Cato's son, would within one year have devolved on me, by the deplorable death of their natural protector. A fading purple invested by degrees the whole promontory: I looked up at Misenus, and at those solitary and silent walks, enlivened so lately by friendship and philosophy. The last indeed of the thoughts we communicated were sorrowful and despondent, but, heavy as they were, they did not pain me like those which were now coming over me in my loneliness on the sea. For there only is the sense of solitude where everything we behold is unlike us, and where we have been accustomed to meet our friends and equals.

QUINCTUS. There [4] is something of softness, not unallied to sorrow, in these mild winter days and their humid sunshine.

MARCUS. I know not, Quinctus, by what train or connexion of

[1] From "QUINCTUS" to "MARCUS" added in 3rd ed.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "called back."

[3] From "O" to "natural protector" added in 2nd ed.; from "A fading" to "QUINCTUS" added in 3rd ed.

[4] 1st ed. includes "There" to "sunshine" in the utterance of Marcus.

ideas they lead me rather to the past than to the future ; unless it be that, when the fibres of our bodies are relaxed, as they must be in such weather, the spirits fall back easily upon reflection, and are slowly incited to expectation. The memory of those great men who consolidated our republic by their wisdom, exalted it by their valour, and protected and defended it by their constancy, stands not alone nor idly : they draw us after them, they place us with them. O Quinctus ! I wish I could impart to you my firm persuasion, that after death we shall enter into their society ; and what matter if the place of our reunion be not the capitol or the forum, be not Elysian meadows or Atlantic islands ? Locality has nothing to do with mind once free. Carry this thought perpetually with you ; and Death, whether you believe it terminates our whole existence or otherwise, will lose, I will not say its terrors, for the brave and wise have none, but its anxieties and inquietudes.

QUINCTUS. Brother, when I see that many dogmas in religion have been invented to keep the intellect in subjection, I may fairly doubt the rest.

MARCUS. Yes, if any emolument be derived from them to the colleges of priests. But surely he deserves the dignity and the worship of a God, who first instructed men that by their own volition they may enjoy eternal happiness ; that the road to it is most easy and most beautiful, such as anyone would follow [1] by preference, even if nothing desirable were at the end of it. Neither to give nor to take offence, are surely the two things most delightful in human life ; and it is by these two things that eternal happiness may be attained. We shall enjoy a future state accordingly as we have employed our intellect and our affections. Perfect bliss can be expected by few : but fewer [2] will be so miserable as they have been here.

QUINCTUS. A belief to the contrary, if we admit a future life, would place the Gods beneath us in their best properties, justice and beneficence.

MARCUS. Belief in a future life is the appetite of reason : and I see not why we should not gratify it as unreluctantly as the baser. Religion does not call upon us to believe the fables of the vulgar, but on the contrary to correct them.

QUINCTUS. Otherwise, overrun as we are in Rome by foreigners of

[1] 1st ed. reads : " take." [2] 1st ed. reads : " still fewer."

every nation, and ready to receive, as we have been, the buffooneries of Syrian and Egyptian priests, our citizens may within a few years become not only the dupes, but the tributaries, of these impostors. The Syrian may scourge us until we join him in his lamentation of Adonis; and the Egyptian may tell us that it is unholy to eat a chicken, and holy to eat an egg; while a sly rogue of Judæa whispers in our ear, "that is superstition; you go to heaven if you pay me a tenth of your harvests." This, I have heard Cneius Pompeius relate, is done in Judæa.

MARCUS. True, but the tenth paid all the expenses both of civil government and religious; for the magistracy was (if such an expression can be repeated with seriousness) *theocratical.* In time of peace a decimation of property would be intolerable.* Pisistratus [1] and Hiero did exact it; but they were usurpers, and the exercise of their power was no more legitimate than the assumption. Among us likewise the tribunes of the people have complained, in former times, that taxes levied on the commons went to abase and ruin them. Certainly the senate did not contribute in the same proportion; but the commons were taxed out of the produce of what had been allotted to them, in the partition of conquered lands; and it was only the stipend of the soldier for preserving by arms the property that his arms had won. The Jews have been always at war; natives of a sterile country and borderers [2] of a fertile one, acute, meditative, melancholy, morose. I know not whether we ourselves have performed such actions as they have, or whether any nation has fought with such resolution and pertinacity. We laugh at their worship; they abominate ours. In this I think we are the wiser; for surely on speculative points it is better to laugh than to abominate. But whence have you brought your eggs and chickens? I have heard our Varro tell many stories about the Egyptian ordinances; but I do not remember this among [3] them; nor indeed did his friend Turranius, who resided long in that country, and was intimately versed in its antiquities, nor his son Manius, a young man

* The Spaniards had been a refractory and rebellious people, and therefore were treated, we may presume, with little lenity: yet T. Livius tells us that a part of Spain paid a *tenth*, another part a *twentieth*. Lib. xliii. See also Tacitus on the subject of taxation, *Ann.*, xiii., and Burmann, *De Vectigali.*—W. S. L.

[1] From "Pisistratus" to "won" added in 3rd ed.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "neighbours."

[3] From "among" to "at Varro's" added in 3rd ed.

of much pleasantry, ever relate it in conversation when we met at Varro's.

QUINCTUS. Indeed the distinction seems a little too absurd, even for the worshippers of cats and crocodiles. Perhaps I may have wronged them: the nation I may indeed have forgotten, but I am certain of the fact: I place it in the archives of superstition, you may deposit it in its right cell. Among [1] the Athenians the Priestess of Minerva was entitled to a measure of barley, a measure of wheat, and an obol, on every birth and death.* Some eastern nations are so totally subjected to the priesthood, that a member of it is requisite at birth, at death, and, by Thalassius! at marriage itself. He can even inflict pains and penalties; he can oblige you to tell him all the secrets of the heart; he can call your wife to him, your daughter to him, your blooming and innocent son; he can absolve from sin; he can exclude from pardon.

MARCUS. Now, Quinctus, egg and chicken, cat and crocodile, disappear and vanish: you repeat impossibilities: mankind, in its lowest degradation, has never been depressed so low. The savage would strangle the impostor that attempted it; the civilised man would scourge him and hiss him from society. Come, come, brother! we may expect such a state of things, whenever we find united the genius of the Cimmerian and the courage of the Troglodyte. Religions wear out, cover them with gold or case them with iron as you will. Jupiter is now less powerful in Crete than when he was in his cradle there, and spreads fewer terrors at Dodona than a shepherd's cur. Proconsuls have removed from Greece, from Asia, from Sicily, the most celebrated statues; and it is doubted at last whether those deities are in heaven whom a cart and a yoke of oxen have carried away on earth. When the civil wars are over, and the minds of men become indolent and inactive, as is always the case after great excitement, it is not improbable that some novelties may be attempted in religion: but, as my prophecies in the whole course of the late events have been accomplished, so you may believe me when I prognosticate that our religion, although it should be disfigured and deteriorated, will continue in many of its features, in many of its pomps and ceremonies, the same. Sibylline books will never be wanting while fear and curiosity are inherent in the

[1] From "Among" to "death" added in 2nd ed.
* Aristot., *Œconom.*, 1. 2.

composition of man. And there is something consolatory in this idea of duration and identity: for whatever be your philosophy, you must acknowledge that it is pleasant to think, although you know not wherefore, that, when we go away, things visible, like things intellectual, will remain in great measure as we left them. A slight displeasure would be felt by us, if we were certain that after our death our houses would be taken down, though not only no longer inhabited by us, but probably not destined to remain in the possession of our children; and that even these vineyards, fields, and gardens, were about to assume another aspect.

QUINCTUS. The sea and the barren rocks will remain for ever as they are; whatever is lovely changes. Misrule and slavery may convert our fertile plains into pestilential marshes; and whoever shall exclaim against the authors and causes of such devastation, may be proscribed, slain, or exiled. Enlightened and virtuous men (painfullest of thoughts!) may condemn him: for a love of security accompanies a love of study, and that by degrees is adulation which was acquiescence. Cruel men have always at their elbow the supporters of arbitrary power; and although the cruel are seldom solicitous in what manner they may be represented to posterity, yet, if any one among them be rather more so than is customary, some projector will whisper in his ear an advice like this. "Oppress, fine, imprison, and torture, those who (you have reason to suspect) are or may be philosophers or historians: so that, if they mention you at all, they will mention you with indignation and abhorrence. Your object is attained: few will implicitly believe them; almost everyone will acknowledge that their faith should be suspected, as there are proofs that they wrote in irritation. This is better than if they spoke of you slightingly, or cursorily, or evasively. By employing a hangman extraordinary, you purchase in perpetuity the title of a clement prince."

MARCUS. Quinctus, you make me smile, by bringing to my recollection that, among the marauders of Pindenissus, was a fellow called by the Romans Fœdirupa,[1] from a certain resemblance no less to his name than to his character. He commanded in a desert and sandy district, which his father and grandfather had enlarged by violence; for the family were, from time immemorial, robbers

[1] Possibly a reference to the characteristics of Frederick the Great. Like Crump, I cannot conjecture who was intended by Gentius.

and assassins. Several schools had once been established in those parts, remote from luxury and seduction; and several good and learned men taught in them, having fled from Mithridates. Fœdirupa assumed on a sudden the air and demeanour of a patriot, and hired one Gentius to compose his rhapsodies on the love of our country, with liberty to promise what he pleased. Gentius put two hundred pieces of silver on his mule, rode to the schools, exhibited his money, and promised the same gratuity to every scholar who would arm and march forth against the enemy. The teachers breathed a free and pure spirit, and, although they well knew the knavery of Gentius, seconded him in his mission. Gentius, as was ordered, wrote down the names of those who repeated the most frequently that of country, and the least so that of Fœdirupa. Even rogues are restless for celebrity. The scholars performed great services against the enemy. On their return they were disarmed; the promises of Fœdirupa were disavowed; the teachers were thrown into prison, accused of violating the ancient laws, of perverting the moral and religious principles, and finally of abusing the simplicity of youth, by illusory and empty promises. Gentius drew up against them the bills of indictment, and offered to take care of their libraries and cellars while they remained in prison. Fœdirupa cast them into dungeons; but, drawing a line of distinction much finer than the most subtle of them had ever done, "I will not kill them," said he; "I will only frighten them to death." He became at last somewhat less cruel, and starved them. Only one was sentenced to lose his head. Gentius comforted him upon the scaffold, by reminding him how much worse he would have fared under Mithridates, who would not only have commanded his head to be cut off, but also to be fixed on a pike, and by assuring him that, instead of such wanton barbarity, he himself would carry it to the widow and her children, within an hour after their conference. The former words moved him little; he hardly heard them; but his heart and his brain throbbed in agony at the sound of children, of widow. He threw his head back; tears rolled over his temples, and dripped from his grey hair. "Ah my dear friend," said Gentius, "have I unwittingly touched a tender part? Be manful; dry your eyes; the children are yours no longer; why be concerned for what you can never see again? My good old friend," added he, "how many kind letters to me has this ring of

yours sealed formerly!" Then, lifting up the hand, he drew it slowly off, overcome by excess of grief. It fell into his bosom, and to moderate his grief he was forced to run away, looking through the corner of his eye at the executioner. The rogue was stoned to death by those he had betrayed, not long before my arrival in the province; and an arrow from an unseen hand did justice on Fœdirupa.[1]

QUINCTUS. I have seen in my life-time several rogues upon their crosses, although few, if any, so deserving of the punishment as Gentius and his colleague. Spectacles of higher interest are nearer and more attractive. It would please me greatly if either the decline of evening or the windings of the coast would allow me a view of Misenus: and I envy you, Marcus, the hour or two before sunset, which enabled you to contemplate it from the unruffled sea at your leisure. Has no violence been offered to the retirement of Cornelia? Are there any traces of her residence left amid our devastations, as there surely ought to be, so few years after her decease?

MARCUS. On that promontory her mansion is yet standing; the same which Marius bought afterward, and which our friend Lucullus last inhabited; and, whether from reverence of her virtues and exalted name, or that the Gods preserve it as a monument of womanhood, its exterior is unchanged. Here she resided many years, and never would be induced to revisit Rome after the murder of her younger son. She cultivated a variety of flowers, naturalised exotic plants, and brought together trees from vale and mountain; trees unproductive of fruit, but affording her, in their superintendence and management, a tranquil expectant pleasure. "There[2] is no amusement," said she, "so lasting and varied, so healthy and peaceful as horticulture." We read that the Babylonians and Persians were formerly much addicted to similar places of recreation. I have scarcely any knowledge in these matters *; and the first time I went thither, I asked many questions of the gardener's boy, a child about nine years old. He thought me even more ignorant than

[1] 1st ed. proceeds from "Fœdirupa" as follows: "I return amidst these home scenes. On the promontory of Misenus is yet standing the mansion of Cornelia—mother of the Gracchi; and, whether," etc.

[2] From "There" to "horticulture" added in 3rd ed.

* "De hortis quod me admones, nec fui unquam valde cupidus, et nunc domus suppeditat mihi hortorum amœnitatem." Ad Q. Fratr. 1. 3. ep. 4.

I was, and said, among other such remarks, "I do not know what they call this plant at Rome, or whether they have it there; but it is among the commonest here, beautiful as it is, and we call it cytisus." "Thank you, child!" said I, smiling; "and," pointing toward two cypresses, "pray what do you call those high and gloomy trees at the extremity of the avenue, just above the precipice?" "Others like them," replied he, "are called cypresses; but these, I know not why, have always been called Tiberius and Caius."

QUINCTUS. Of all studies the most delightful and the most useful is biography. The seeds of great events lie near the surface; historians delve too deep for them. No history was ever true: lives I have read which, if they were not, had the appearance, the interest, and the utility of truth.

MARCUS. I have collected facts about Cornelia, worth recording; and I would commemorate them the rather, as, while the Greeks have had among them no few women of abilities, we can hardly mention two.

QUINCTUS. Yet ours have advantages which theirs had not. Did Cornelia die unrepining and contented?

MARCUS. She was firmly convinced to the last that an agrarian law would have been just and beneficial, and was consoled that her illustrious sons had discharged at once the debt of nature and of patriotism. Glory is a light that shines from us on others, and not from others on us. Assured that future ages would render justice to the memory of her children, Cornelia thought they had already received the highest approbation, when they had received their own.[1]

QUINCTUS. If anything was wanting, their mother gave it.

MARCUS.[2] No stranger of distinction left Italy without a visit to her. You would imagine that they, and that she particularly, would avoid the mention of her sons: it was however the subject on which she most delighted to converse, and which she never failed to introduce on finding a worthy auditor. I have heard from our father and from Scævola, both of whom in their adolescence had been present on such occasions, that she mentioned her children, no

[1] 1st ed. reads "own. If anything," etc., the utterance then being that of Marcus.

[2] From "MARCUS" to "Gracchi" added in 2nd ed.

longer indeed with the calm complacency and full content with which she showed them to the lady of Campania as her gems and ornaments, but with such an exultation of delight at their glory, as she would the heroes of antiquity. So little of what is painful in emotion did she exhibit at the recital, those who could not comprehend her magnanimity at first believed her maddened by her misfortunes; but so many signs of wisdom soon displayed themselves, such staidness and sedateness of demeanour, such serene majestic suavity, they felt as if some deity were present; and when wonder and admiration and awe permitted them to lift up their eyes again toward her, they discovered from hers that the fondest of mothers had been speaking, the mother of the Gracchi.[1]

QUINCTUS. I wish you would write her life.

MARCUS. Titus Pomponius may undertake it; and Titus may live to accomplish it. All times are quiet times with him; the antagonist, the competitor of none; the true philosopher! He knows the worth of men and the weight of factions, and how little they merit the disturbance of our repose. Ah Quinctus! that I never looked back until I came upon the very brink of the whirlpool! that, drawing all my glory from my lungs, I find all my peace in exhaustion! Our Atticus never did thus; and he therefore may live to do what you propose for me, not indeed too late in the day, but with broken rest, and with zeal (I must acknowledge it) abated. Your remark on biography is just; yet how far below the truth is even the best representation of those[2] whose minds the Gods have illuminated! How much greater would the greatest man appear, if anyone about him could perceive those innumerable filaments of thought, which break as they arise from the brain, and the slenderest of which is worth all the wisdom of many at whose discretion lies the felicity of nations! This in itself is impossible; but there are fewer who mark what appears on a sudden and disappears again (such is the conversation of the wise) than there are who calculate those stars that are now coming forth above us: scarcely one in several millions can apportion, to what is exalted in mind, its magnitude, place, and distance. We must be contented to be judged by that which people can discern and handle: that which they can have among

[1] From "Gracchi" to "abated" added in 3rd ed.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "those on whose minds the Gods or Muses vouchsafe to descend. How," etc.

them most at leisure, is most likely to be well examined and duly estimated. Whence I am led to believe that my writings, and those principally which instruct men in their rights and duties, will obtain me a solider and more extensive reputation than I could have acquired in public life, by busier, harder, and more anxious labours. Public men appear to me to live in that delusion which Socrates, in the *Phædo*, would persuade us is common to all our species. "We live in holes," says he, "and fancy that we are living in the highest parts of the earth." What he says physically I would say morally. Judge whether my observation is not at least as reasonable as his hypothesis; and indeed, to speak ingenuously, whether I have not converted what is physically false and absurd into what is morally true and important.

QUINCTUS. True, beyond a question, and important as those whom it concerns will let it be. They who stand in high stations, wish for higher; but they who have occupied the highest of all, often think with regret of someone pleasanter they left below. The [1] most wonderful thing in human nature is the variance of knowledge and will, where no passion is the stimulant: whence that system of life is often chosen and persevered in, which a man is well convinced is neither the best for him nor the easiest. Few can see clearly where their happiness lies; and, in those who see it, you will scarcely find one who has the courage to pursue it. Every action must have its motive; but weak motives are sufficient for weak minds; and whenever we see one which we believed to be a stronger, moved habitually by what appears inadequate, we may be certain that there is (to bring a metaphor from the forest) more top than root. Servius Tullius, a prudent man, dedicated to Fortune what we call the narrow temple, with a statue in proportion, expressing his idea that Fortune in the condition of mediocrity is more reasonably than in any other the object of our vows. He could have given her as magnificent a name, and as magnificent a residence, as any she possesses; and you know she has many of both; but he wished perhaps to try whether for once she would be as favourable to wisdom as to enterprise.*

[1] "The" to "root" is in 1st ed. part of Landor's footnote beginning "That Cicero."

* Plutarch, in his *Problems*, offers several reasons, each different from this. —W. S. L.

MARCUS. If life allows us time for the experiment, let us also try it.*

Sleep,[1] which the Epicureans and others have represented as the image of death, is, we know, the repairer of activity and strength. If they spoke reasonably and consistently, they might argue from their own principles, or at least take the illustration from their own fancy, that death like sleep may also restore our powers, and in proportion to its universality and absoluteness. Pursuers as they are of pleasure, their unsettled and restless imagination loves rather to brood over an abyss, than to expatiate on places of amenity and composure. Just as sleep is the renovator of corporeal vigour, so, with their permission, I would believe death to be of the mind's; that the body, to which it is attached rather from habitude than from reason, is little else than a disease to our immortal spirit; and that, like the remora, of which mariners tell marvels, it counteracts, as it were, both oar and sail, in the most strenuous advances we can make toward felicity. Shall we lament to feel this reptile drop off? Or shall we not, on the contrary, leap with alacrity on shore, and offer up in gratitude to the Gods whatever is left about us uncorroded and unshattered? A broken and abject mind is the thing least worthy of their acceptance.

QUINCTUS. Brother, you talk as if there were a plurality of Gods.

MARCUS. I know not and care not how many there may be of them. Philosophy points to unity: but while we are here, we speak as those do who are around us, and employ in these matters the language of our country. Italy is not so fertile in hemlock as Greece; yet a wise man will dissemble half his wisdom on such a

* That Cicero began to think a private life preferable to a public, and that his philosophical no less than his political opinions were unstable, is shown nowhere so evidently as in the eighth book of his *Epistles*. "Nam omnem nostram de republicâ curam, cogitationem, de dicendâ in senatu sententiâ, &c., abjecimus, et in Epicuri nos, adversarii nostri, castra conjecimus." Several years before the date of this he writes to Atticus, "Malo in illâ tuâ sediculâ quam habes sub imagine Aristotelis sedere, quam in istorum sellâ curuli, tecumque apud te ambulari quam cum eo quocum video esse ambulandum: sed de ista ambulatione sors viderit, aut siquis est qui curet deus." L. iv. E. ix.

Demosthenes in his later days entertained the opinion that if there were two roads, the one leading to government, the other to death, a prudent man would choose the latter.[1]—W. S. L.

[1] From "Sleep" to "called upon" added in 2nd ed.

[1] Nine lines of the original footnote here omitted.

topic; and I, as you remember, adopting the means of dialogue, have often delivered my opinions in the voice of others, and speak now as custom not as reason leads me.

QUINCTUS. Marcus, I still observe in you somewhat of aversion to Epicurus, a few of whose least important positions you have controverted in your dialogues: and I wish that, even there, you had been less irrisory, less of a pleader; that you had been, in dispassionate urbanity, his follower. Such was also the opinion of two men the most opposite in other things, Brutus and Cæsar. Religions may fight in the street or over the grave, Philosophy never should. We ought to forgo the manners of the forum in our disquisitions, which if they continue to be agitated as they have been, will be designated at last not only by foul epithets drawn from that unsober tub, but, as violence is apt to increase in fury until it falls from exhaustion, by those derived from war and bloodshed. I should not be surprised if they who write and reason on our calm domestic duties, on our best and highest interests, should hereafter be designated by some such terms as *polemical* and *sarcastic*. As horses start aside from objects they see imperfectly, so do men. Enmities are excited by an indistinct view; they would be allayed by conference. Look at any long avenue of trees by which the traveller on our principal highways is protected from the sun. Those at the beginning are wide apart; but those at the end almost meet. Thus happens it frequently in opinions. Men, who were far asunder, come nearer and nearer in the course of life, if they have strength enough to quell, or good sense enough to temper and assuage, their earlier animosities. Were it possible for you to have spent an hour with Epicurus, you would have been delighted with him; for his nature was like the better part of yours. Zeno set out from an opposite direction, yet they meet at last and shake hands. He who shows us how Fear may be reasoned with and pacified, how Death may be disarmed of terrors, how Pleasure may be united with Innocence and with Constancy, he who persuades us that Vice is painful and vindictive, and that Ambition, deemed the most manly of our desires, is the most childish and illusory, deserves our gratitude. Children would fall asleep before they had trifled so long as grave men do. If you must quarrel with Epicurus on the principal good, take my idea. The happy man is he who distinguishes the boundary between desire and delight, and stands firmly on the higher ground; he who knows that pleasure not

only is not possession, but is often to be lost and always to be endangered by it. In life, as in those prospects which if the sun were above the horizon we should see from hence, the objects covered with the softest light, and offering the most beautiful forms in the distance, are wearisome to attain, and barren.

In one of your last letters, you told me that you had come over into the camp of your old adversary.

Marcus. I could not rest with him. As we pardon those reluctantly who destroy our family tombs, is it likely or reasonable that he should be forgiven, who levels to the ground the fabric to which they lead, and to which they are only a rude and temporary vestibule?

Quinctus. Socrates was heard with more attention, Pythagoras had more authority in his life-time; but no philosopher hath excited so much enthusiasm in those who never frequented, never heard nor saw him; and yet his doctrines are not such in themselves as would excite it. How then can it be? otherwise than partly from the innocence of his life, and partly from the relief his followers experienced in abstraction from unquiet and insatiable desires. Many, it is true, have spoken of him with hatred: but among his haters are none who knew him. Which is remarkable, singular, wonderful: for hatred seems as natural to men as hunger is, and excited like hunger by the presence of its food; and the more exquisite the food, the more excitable is the hunger.

Marcus. I do not remember to have met anywhere before with the thought you have just expressed. Certain it is however that men in general have a propensity to hatred, profitless as it is and painful. We say proverbially, after Ennius or some other old poet, the descent to Avernus is easy: not less easily are we carried down to the more pestiferous pool whereinto we would drag our superiors and submerge them. It is the destiny of the obscure to be despised; it is the privilege of the illustrious to be hated. Whoever hates me, proves and feels himself to be less than I am. If in argument we can make a man angry with us, we have drawn him from his vantage-ground and overcome him. For he who, in order to attack a little man (and everyone calls his adversary so), ceases to defend the truth, shows that truth is less his object than the little man. I profess the tenets of the New Academy, because it teaches us modesty in the midst of wisdom, and leads through doubt to inquiry. Hence it appears to

me that it must render us quieter and more studious, without doing what Epicurus would do; that is, without singing us to sleep in groves and meadows, while our country is calling on us loudly to defend her. Nevertheless I have lived in the most familiar way with Epicureans, as you know, and have loved them affectionately. There is no more certain sign of a narrow mind, of stupidity, and of arrogance, than to stand aloof from those who think differently from ourselves. If they have weighed the matter in dispute as carefully, it is equitable to suppose that they have the same chance as we have of being in the right: if they have not, we may as reasonably be out of humour with our footman or chairman: he is more ignorant and more careless of it still.

I have seen reason to change the greater part of my opinions. Let me confess to you, Quinctus, we oftener say things because we can say them well, than because they are sound and reasonable. One would imagine that every man in society knows the nature of friendship. Similarity in the disposition, identity in the objects liked and disliked, have been stated (and stated by myself) as the essence of it: nothing is untruer. Titus Pomponius and I are different in our sentiments, our manners, our habits of life, our ideas of men and things, our topics of study, our sects of philosophy; added to which our country and companions have these many years been wide apart; yet we are friends, and always were, and, if man can promise anything beyond the morrow, always shall be.

QUINCTUS. Your "*idem velle atque idem nolle*," of which you now perceive the futility, has never been suspected; not even by those who have seen Marius and Sylla, Cæsar and Pompeius, at variance and at war, for no other reason than because they sought and shunned the same thing; shunning privacy and seeking supremacy. Young men quote the sentence daily; those very young men perhaps who court the same mistress, and whose friendship not only has not been corroborated, but has been shattered and torn up by it. Few authors have examined any one thing well, scarcely one many things. Your Dialogues are wiser, I think, than those of the Greeks; certainly more animated and more diversified; but I doubt whether you have bestowed so much time and labour on any question of general interest to mankind, as on pursuing a thief like Verres, or scourging a drunkard like Piso, or drawing the nets of Vulcan over the couch of Clodius. For which reason I should not wonder if

your Orations were valued by posterity more highly than your Dialogues; although the best oration can only show the clever man, while Philosophy shows the great one.

MARCUS. I approve of the Dialogue for the reason you have given me just now; the fewness of settled truths, and the facility of turning the cycle of our thoughts to what aspect we wish, as geometers and astronomers the globe. A book was lately on the point of publication, I hear, to demonstrate the childishness of the Dialogue; and the man upon the bench a little way below the Middle Janus, who had already paid the writer thirty denars for it, gave it back to him on reading the word *childish*. For Menander or Sophocles or Euripides had caught his eye, all of whom, he heard, wrote in dialogue, as did Homer in the better parts of his two poems: and he doubted whether a young man ignorant of these authors, could ever have known that the same method had been employed by Plato on all occasions, and by Xenophon in much of his *Recollections*, and that the conversations of Socrates would have lost their form and force, delivered in any other manner. He might perhaps have set up himself against the others; but his modesty would not let him stand before the world opposed to Socrates under the Shield of Apollo. Morus,[1] the man below the Middle Janus,* is very liberal, and left him in possession of the thirty denars, on condition that he should write as acrimoniously against as eloquent and judicious an author, whenever called upon.[2]

QUINCTUS.[3] Speaking of Plato in the earlier series of your philosophical disquisitions, you more highly praised his language than you appear to have done lately.

MARCUS. There is indeed much to admire in it; but even his language has fewer charms for me now, than it had in youth. Plato will always be an object of admiration and reverence, to men who would rather see vast images of uncertain objects reflected from illuminated clouds, than representations of things in their just proportions, measurable, tangible, and convertible to household use.

[1] "Morus": John Murray. The reference is to Hare's success in parodying in advance the *Quarterly Review's* condemnation of the dialogue.

* The *Middle Janus* is mentioned by Horace. It has usually been considered as a temple, and the remains of it are pointed out as such; but in fact it was only the *central arch* of a market-place.—W. S. L.

[2] End of passage added in 2nd ed.

[3] From "QUINCTUS" to "predicament" added in 2nd ed.

Therefore, in speaking on the levity of the Greeks, I turned my eyes toward him; that none, whatever commendations I bestowed upon his diction, might mistake me in describing the qualities of his mind. Politics will gain nothing of the practical from him, philosophy nothing of what is applicable to morals, to science, to the arts, or the conduct of life. Unswathe his Egyptian mummy; and from the folds of fine linen, bestrewn and impregnated with aromatics, you disclose the grave features and gracile bones of a goodly and venerable cat. Little then can you wonder if I have taken him as one of small authority, when I composed my works on *Government*, on the *Social Duties*, or on the *Nature of the Gods*.

QUINCTUS. You have forborne to imitate his style, although you cite the words of a Greek enthusiast, who says that if Jupiter had spoken in Greek he would have spoken in the language of Plato.

MARCUS. Jupiter had no occasion for philosophy; we have.

QUINCTUS. I prefer your method of conducting the dialogue, although I wish you had given us a greater variety both of topics and of characters.

MARCUS. If time and health are granted me, perhaps I may do somewhat more than I or others have accomplished in this department.

QUINCTUS. Why do you smile? at your confidence of succeeding?

MARCUS. No indeed; but because all strong and generous wine must deposit its crust before it gratifies the palate: and are not all such writings in the same predicament?

QUINCTUS.[1] Various pieces of such criticism have been brought to me. One writer says of you, "He would pretend to an equality in style and wisdom with Theophrastus." Another, "We remember his late invectives, which he had the assurance to call Philippics, fancying himself another Demosthenes!" A third, "He knows so little of the Dialogue, that many of his speakers talk for a quarter of an hour uninterruptedly; in fact, until they can talk no longer, and have nothing more to say upon the subject."

MARCUS. Rare objection! As if the dialogue of statesmen and philosophers, which appertains by its nature to dissertation, should resemble the dialogue of comedians, and Lælius and Scævola be turned into Davus and Syrus! Although I have derived my ideas of excellence from Greece, out of which there is nothing elegant,

[1] From "QUINCTUS" to "Morus" added in 3rd ed.

nothing chaste and temperate, nothing not barbarous, nevertheless I have a mind of my own equal in capacity and in order to any there, indebted as I acknowledge it to be to Grecian exercises and Grecian institutions. Neither my time of life nor my rank in it, nor indeed my temper and disposition, would allow me to twitch the sleeves of sophists, and to banter them on the idleness of their disputations with trivial and tiny and petulant interrogatories. I introduce grave men, and they talk gravely; important subjects, and I treat them worthily. Lighter, if my spirits had the elasticity to give them play, I should touch more delicately and finely, letting them fly off in more fantastic forms and more vapoury particles. But who indeed can hope to excell in two manners so widely different? Who hath ever done it, Greek or Roman? If wiser men than those who appear at present to have spoken against my dialogues, should undertake the same business, I would inform them that the most severe way of judging these works, with any plea or appearance of fairness, is, to select the best passages from the best writers I may have introduced, and to place my pages in opposition to theirs in equal quantities. Suppose me introducing Solon or Phocion, Æschines or Demosthenes; that is, whatever is most wise, whatever is most eloquent; should it appear that I have equalled them where so little space is allowed me, I have done greatly more than has ever been done hitherto. Style I consider as nothing if what it covers be unsound: wisdom in union with harmony is oracular. On this idea, the wiser of ancient days venerated in the same person the deity of oracles and of music: and it must have been the most malicious and the most ingenious of satirists, who transferred the gift of eloquence to the God of thieves.

Quinctus. I am not certain that you have claimed for yourself the fair trial you would have demanded for a client. One of the interlocutors may sustain a small portion of a thesis.

Marcus. In that case, take the whole Conversation; examine the quality, the quantity, the variety, the intensity, of mental power exerted. I myself would arm my adversaries, and teach them how to fight me; and I promise you, the first blow I receive from one of them, I will cheer him heartily: it will augur well for our country. At present I can do nothing more liberal than in sending thirty other denars to the mortified bondman of Morus.[1]

[1] End of passage added in 3rd ed.

I have performed one action; I have composed some few things, which posterity, I would fain believe, will not suffer to be quite forgotten. Fame, they tell you, is air: but without air there is no life for any: without fame there is none for the best. And yet, who knows whether all our labours and vigils may not at last be involved in oblivion! What treasures of learning must have perished, which existed long before the time of Homer! For it is utterly out of the nature of things, that the first attempt in any art or science should be the most perfect: such is the Iliad: I look upon it as the sole fragment of a lost world. Grieved indeed I should be to think, as you have heard me say before, that an enemy may possess our city five thousand years hence: yet when I consider that soldiers of all nations are in the armies of the triumvirate, and that all are more zealous for her ruin than our citizens are for her defence, this event is not unlikely the very next. The worst of barbarism is that which emanates, not from the absence of laws, but from their corruption. So long as virtue stands merely on the same level with vice, nothing is desperate, nothing is irreparable; few governments in their easy [1] decrepitude care for more. But when rectitude is dangerous and depravity secure, then eloquence and courage, the natural pride and safeguard of states, become the strongest and most active instruments in their overthrow.

QUINCTUS. I see the servants have lighted the lamps in the house earlier than usual, hoping, I suppose, we shall retire to rest in good time, that to-morrow they may prepare the festivities for your birthday.

MARCUS.[2] They are bringing out of the dining-room, I apprehend, the busts our Atticus lately sent me. Let us hasten to prevent it, or they may place Homer and Solon with the others, instead of inserting them in the niches opposite my bed, where I wish to contemplate them by the first light of morning, the first objects opening on my eyes. For, without the one, not only poetry, but eloquence too, and every high species of literary composition, might have remained until this day, in all quarters of the globe, incondite and indigested: and without the other even Athens herself might have explored her way in darkness, and never have exhibited to us Romans the prototype of those laws on which our glory hath arisen, and the loss of which we are destined to lament as our last and greatest.

[1] *Sic*; query "early." [2] From "MARCUS" to "QUINCTUS" added in 3rd ed.

QUINCTUS. Within how few minutes has the night closed in upon us! Nothing is left discernible of the promontories, or the long irregular breakers under them. We have before us only a faint glimmering from the shells in our path, and from the blossoms of the arbutus.

MARCUS. The little solitary Circean hill,[1] and even the nearer, loftier, and whiter rocks of Anxur, are become indistinguishable. We leave our Cato and our Lucullus, we leave Cornelia and her children, the scenes of friendship and the recollections of greatness, for Lepidus and Octavius and Antonius; and who knows whether this birth-day, between which and us so few days [2] intervene, may not be, as it certainly will be the least pleasurable, the last!

QUINCTUS.[3] Do not despond, my brother!

MARCUS. I am as far from despondency and dejection as from joy and cheerfulness. Death [4] has two aspects: dreary and sorrowful to those of prosperous, mild and almost genial to those of adverse fortune. Her countenance is old to the young, and youthful to the aged: to the former her voice is importunate, her gait terrific: the latter she approaches like a bedside friend, and calls in a whisper that invites to rest. To us, my Quinctus, advanced as we are on our way, weary from its perplexities and dizzy from its precipices, she gives a calm welcome; let her receive a cordial one.

If life is a present which anyone foreknowing its contents would have willingly declined, does it not follow that anyone would as willingly give it up, having well tried what they are? I speak of the reasonable, the firm, the virtuous; not of those who, like bad governors, are afraid of laying down the powers and privileges they have been proved unworthy of holding. Were it certain that the longer we live the wiser we become and the happier, then indeed a long life would be desirable: but since on the contrary our mental strength decays, and our enjoyments of every kind not only sink and cease, but diseases and sorrows come in place of them, if any wish is rational, it is surely the wish that we should go away unshaken by years, undepressed by griefs, and undespoiled of our better faculties. Life and death appear more certainly ours than

[1] 1st ed. reads: "The Circean hills, and the island of Parthenope, and even the white rocks," etc.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "only one other day intervenes."

[3] From "QUINCTUS" to "cheerfulness" added in 3rd ed.

[4] From "Death" to "one" added in 2nd ed.

whatsoever else: and yet hardly can that be called ours, which comes without our knowledge, and goes without it; or that which we can not put aside if we would, and indeed can anticipate but little. There are few who can regulate life to any extent; none who can order the things it shall receive or exclude. What value then should be placed upon it by the prudent man, when duty or necessity calls him away? or what reluctance should he feel on passing into a state where at least he must be conscious of fewer checks and inabilities? Such, my brother, as[1] the brave commander, when from the secret and dark passages of some fortress, wherein implacable enemies besieged him, having performed all his duties and exhausted all his munition, he issues at a distance into open day.

Everything has its use; life to teach us the contempt of death, and death the contempt of life. Glory, which among all things between stands eminently the principal, although it has been considered by some philosophers as mere vanity and deception, moves those great intellects which nothing else could have stirred, and places them where they can best and most advantageously serve the commonwealth. Glory[2] can be safely despised by those only who have fairly won it: a low, ignorant, or vicious man should dispute on other topics. The philosopher who contemns it, has every rogue in his sect, and may reckon that it will outlive all others. Occasion may have been wanting to some; I grant it: they may have remained their whole life-time like dials in the shade, always fit for use and always useless: but this must occur either in monarchal governments, or where persons occupy the first station who ought hardly to have been admitted to the secondary, and whom jealousy has guided more frequently than justice.

It is true there is much inequality, much inconsiderateness, in the distribution of fame; and the principles according to which honour ought to be conferred, are not only violated, but often inverted. Whoever wishes to be thought great among men, must do them some great mischief; and the longer he continues in doing things of this sort, the more he will be admired. The features of Fortune are so like those of Genius as to be mistaken by almost all the world. We whose names and works are honourable to our country, and destined to survive her, are less esteemed than those who have accelerated her decay: yet even here the sense of injury

[1] *Sic;* query "is." [2] From "Glory" to "others" added in 2nd ed.

rises from and is accompanied by a sense of merit, the tone of which is deeper and predominant.

When we have spoken of life, death, and glory, we have spoken of all important things, except friendship: for eloquence and philosophy, and other inferior attainments, are either means conducible to life and glory, or antidotes against the bitterness of death. We can not conquer fate and necessity, yet we can yield to them in such a manner as to be greater than if we could. I have observed your impatience: you were about to appeal in behalf of virtue. But virtue is presupposed in friendship, as I have mentioned in my *Lælius;* nor have I ever separated it from philosophy or from glory. I[1] discussed the subject most at large and most methodically in my treatise on our *Duties*, and I find no reason to alter my definition or deductions. On friendship, in the present condition of our affairs, I would say but little. Could I begin my existence again, and what is equally impossible, could I see before me all I have seen, I would choose few acquaintances, fewer friendships, no familiarities. This rubbish, for such it generally is, collecting at the base of an elevated mind, lessens its height and impairs its character. What requires to be sustained, if it is greater, falls; if it is smaller, is lost to view by the intervention of its supporters.*

[1] From "I" to "deductions" added in 3rd ed.

* These are the ideas of a man deceived and betrayed by almost everyone he trusted. But if Cicero had considered that there never was an elevated soul or warm heart which has not been ungenerously and unjustly dealt with, and that ingratitude has usually been in proportion to desert, his vanity if not his philosophy would have buoyed up and supported him. He himself is redundant in such instances. To set Pompeius aside, as a man ungrateful to all, he had spared Julius Cæsar in his consulate when he was implicated in the conspiracy of Catiline. Clodius, Lepidus, and Antonius, had been admitted to his friendship and confidence: Octavius owed to him his popularity and estimation: Philologus,† whom he had fed and instructed, pointed out to his pursuers the secret path he had taken to avoid them: and Popilius, their leader, had by his eloquence been saved from the punishment of one parricide that he might commit another.[1]

It were well if Cicero had been so sincere in his friendship as perhaps he thought he was. The worst action of his life may be narrated in his own words. "Qualis futura sit Cæsaris Vituperatio contra Laudationem meam perspexi ex eo libro quem Hirtius ad me misit, in quo colligit vitia Catonis, sed cum maximis

† So his name is written by Plutarch, who calls him ἀπελεύθερος Κοίντου. We may doubt whether it should not be Philogonus, for a freed-man of Quinctus with that name is mentioned in the *Epistles* (ad Q. F. 1. 3).—W. S. L.

[1] The note ends in the 1st ed. at "commit another."

MARCUS TULLIUS AND QUINCTUS CICERO

In[1] literature great men suffer more from their little friends than from their potent enemies. It is not by our adversaries that our early shoots of glory are nipped and broken off, or our later pestilentially blighted; it is by those who lie at our feet, and look up to us with a solicitous and fixed regard until our shadow grows thicker and makes them colder. Then they begin to praise us as worthy men indeed and good citizens, but rather vain, and what (to speak the truth) in others they should call presumptuous. They entertain no doubt of our merit in literature; yet justice forces them to declare that several have risen up lately who promise to surpass us. Should it be asked of them who these are, they look modest, and tell you softly and submissively, it would ill become them to repeat the eulogies of their acquaintance, and that no man pronounces his own name so distinctly as another's. I had something of oratory once about me, and was borne on high by the spirit of the better Greeks. Thus they thought of me; and they thought of me, Quinctus, no more than thus. They had reached the straits, and saw before them the boundary, the impassable Atlantic, of the intellectual world. But now I am a bad citizen and a worse writer: I want the exercise and effusion of my own breath to warm me: I must be chafed by an adversary: I must be supported by a crowd: I require the forum, the rostra, the senate: in my individuality I am nothing.

QUINCTUS. I remember the time when, instead of smiling, you would have been offended and angry at such levity and impudence.

MARCUS. The misfortunes of our country cover ours, and I am imperceptible to myself in the dark gulf that is absorbing her. Should I be angry? Anger, always irrational, is most so here. These men see those above them as they see the stars: one is almost as large as another, almost as bright; small distance between them. They can not quite touch us with the forefinger; but they can almost. And what matters it? they can utter as many things against us, and as fiercely, as Polyphemus did against the heavens. Since my dialogues are certainly the last things I shall compose, and since we, my brother, shall perhaps, for the little time that is

laudibus meis: itaque misi librum ad Muscam, ut tuis librariis daret, *volo enim eum divulgari.*" Ad Attic., xii. 40. An honest man would be little gratified by the divulgation of his praises accompanied by calumnies on his friend, or even by the exposure of his faults and weaknesses.—W. S. L.

[1] From "In" to "the lower with them" added in 2nd ed.

remaining of our lives, be soon divided, we may talk about these matters as among the wisest and most interesting: and the rather if there is anything in them displaying the character of our country and the phasis of our times.

Aquilius Cimber,[1] who lives somewhere under the Alps, was patronised by Caius Cæsar for his assiduities, and by Antonius for his admirable talent in telling a story and sitting up late. He bears on his shoulders the whole tablet of his nation, reconciling its incongruities. Apparently very frank, but intrinsically very insincere; a warm friend while drinking; cold, vapid, limber, on the morrow, as the festal coronet he had worn the night before.

QUINCTUS. Such a person, I can well suppose, may nevertheless have acquired the friendship of Antonius.

MARCUS. His popularity in those parts rendered him also an object of attention to Octavius, who told me he was prodigiously charmed with his stories of departed spirits, which Aquilius firmly believes are not altogether departed from his country. He hath several old books relating to the history, true and fabulous, of the earlier Cimbri. Such is the impression they made upon him in his youth, he soon composed others on the same model, and better (I have heard) than the originals. His opinion is now much regarded in his province on matters of literature in general; although you would as soon think of sending for a smith to select an ostrich feather at the milliner's. He neglects no means of money-getting, and has entered into an association for this purpose with the booksellers of the principal Transpadane cities. On the first appearance of my dialogues, he, not having read them, nor having heard of their tendency, praised them; moderately indeed and reservedly; but finding the people in power ready to persecute and oppress me, he sent his excuse to Antonius, that he was drunk when he did it; and to Octavius, that the fiercest of the Lemures held him by the throat until he had written what his heart revolted at. And he ordered his friends and relatives to excuse him by one or other of these apologies, according to the temper and credulity of the person they addressed.

QUINCTUS. I never heard the story of Aquilius, no less amusing

[1] Apparently a composite portrait, some of the features being taken from Sir Walter Scott, some from Jeffrey. The actual enemy was Hazlitt, but clearly he was not here in Landor's mind.

than the well-known one of him, that he went several miles out of his road to visit the tomb of the Scipios, only to lift up his tunic against it in contempt. He boasted of the feat and of the motive.

MARCUS. Until the worthies of our times shone forth, he venerated no Roman since the exiled kings, in which his favourite is the son of the last: and there are certain men in high authority who assure him they know how to appreciate and compensate so heroic and sublime an affection. The Catos and Brutuses are wretches with him, and particularly since Cato pardoned him for having hired a fellow (as was proved) to turn some swine into his turnip-field at Tusculum. Looking at him or hearing of him, unless from those who know his real character, you would imagine him generous, self-dependent, self-devoted: but this upright and staunch thistle bears a yielding and palpable down for adulation.

QUINCTUS. Better *that* than malice. Whatever he may think or say of you, I hope he never speaks maliciously of those whose livelihood, like his own, depends upon their writings; the studious, the enthusiastic, the unhardened in politics, the uncrossed in literature.

MARCUS. I wish I could confirm or encourage you in your hopes; report, as it reaches me, by no means favours them.

QUINCTUS. This hurts me; for Aquilius, although the Graces in none of their attributions are benignant to him, is a man of industry and genius.

MARCUS. Alas, Quinctus! to pass Aquilius by, as not concerned in the reflection, the noblest elevations of the human mind have in appertenance their sands and swamps; hardness at top, putridity at bottom. Friends themselves, and not only the little ones you have spoken of, not only the thoughtless and injudicious, but graver and more constant, will occasionally gratify a superficial feeling, which soon grows deeper, by irritating an orator or writer. You remember the apologue of Critobulus?

QUINCTUS. No, I do not.

MARCUS. It was sent to me by Pomponius Atticus soon after my marriage: I must surely have shown it to you.

QUINCTUS. Not you indeed; and I should wonder that so valuable a present, so rare an accession to Rome as a new Greek volume, could have come into your hands, and not out of them into mine, if you had not mentioned that it was about the time of your nuptials. Let me hear the story.

Marcus. "I was wandering," says Critobulus, "in the midst of a forest, and came suddenly to a small round fountain or pool, with several white flowers (I remember) and broad leaves in the centre of it, but clear of them at the sides, and of a water the most pellucid. Suddenly a very beautiful figure came from behind me, and stood between me and the fountain. I was amazed. I could not distinguish the sex, the form being youthful and the face toward the water, on which it was gazing and bending over its reflection, like another Hylas or Narcissus. It then stooped and adorned itself with a few of the simplest flowers, and seemed the fonder and tenderer of those which had borne the impression of its graceful feet: and having done so, it turned round and looked upon me with an air of indifference and unconcern. The longer I fixed my eyes on her, for I now discovered it was a female, the more ardent I became and the more embarrassed. She perceived it, and smiled. Her eyes were large and serene; not very thoughtful, as if perplexed, not very playful, as if easily to be won; and her countenance was tinged with so delightful a colour, that it appeared an effluence from an irradiated cloud passing over it in the heavens. She gave me the idea, from her graceful attitude, that, although adapted to the perfection of activity, she felt rather an inclination for repose. I would have taken her hand: 'You shall presently,' said she; and never fell on mortal a diviner glance than on me. I told her so. She replied, 'You speak well.' I then fancied she was simple, and weak, and fond of flattery, and began to flatter her. She turned her face away from me, and answered nothing. I declared my excessive love: she went some paces off. I swore it was impossible for one who had ever seen her to live without her; she went several paces farther. 'By the immortal Gods!' I cried, 'you shall not leave me.' She turned round and looked benignly; but shook her head. 'You are another's then! Say it! say it! utter the word once from your lips—and let me die.' She smiled, more melancholy than before, and replied, 'O Critobulus! I am indeed another's: I am a God's.' The air of the interior heavens seemed to pierce me as she spoke; and I trembled as impassioned men may tremble once. After a pause, 'I might have thought it!' cried I: 'why then come before me and torment me?' She began to play and trifle with me, as became her age (I fancied) rather than her engagement, and she placed my hand upon the flowers in her lap without a blush. The

whole fountain would not at that moment have assuaged my thirst. The sound of the breezes and of the birds around us, even the sound of her own voice, were all confounded in my ear, as colours are in the fulness and intensity of light. She said many pleasing things to me, to the earlier and greater part of which I was insensible; but in the midst of those which I could hear and was listening to attentively, she began to pluck out the grey hairs from my head, and to tell me that the others too were of a hue not very agreeable. My heart sank within me. Presently there was hardly a limb or feature without its imperfection. 'O!' cried I in despair, 'you have been used to the Gods: you must think so: but among men I do not believe I am considered as ill-made or unseemly.' She paid little attention to my words or my vexation; and when she had gone on with my defects for some time longer, in the same calm tone and with the same sweet countenance, she began to declare that she had much affection for me, and was desirous of inspiring it in return. I was about to answer her with rapture, when on a sudden, in her girlish humour she stuck a thorn, wherewith she had been playing, into that part of the body which supports us when we sit. I know not whether it went deeper than she intended, but catching at it, I leaped up in shame and anger, and at the same moment felt something upon my shoulder. It was an armlet inscribed with letters of bossy adamant, 'Jove to his daughter Truth.'

"She stood again before me at a distance, and said gracefully, 'Critobulus! I am too young and simple for you; but you will love me still, and not be made unhappy by it in the end. Farewell.'"

QUINCTUS. Why did you not insert this allegory in some part of your works, as you have often many pages from the Greek?

MARCUS. I might have done it, but I know not whether the state of our literature is any longer fit for its reception.

QUINCTUS. Confess, if it is not, that the fault is in some sort yours, who might have directed the higher minds, and have carried the lower with them.

MARCUS. I regard[1] with satisfaction the efforts I have made to serve my country: but the same eloquence, the merit of which not even the most barbarous of my adversaries can detract from me, would have enabled me to elucidate large fields of philosophy,

[1] 1st ed. reads: "contemplate."

hitherto untrodden by our countrymen, and in which the Greeks have wandered widely or worked unprofitably.

QUINCTUS. Excuse my interruption. I heard a few days ago a pleasant thing reported of Asinius Pollio: he said at supper, your language is that of an Allobrox.

MARCUS. After supper, I should rather think, and with Antonius. Asinius, urged by the strength of instinct, picks from amid the freshest herbage the dead dry stalk, and dozes and dreams about it where he can not find it. Acquired, it is true, I have a certain portion of my knowledge, and consequently of my language, from the Allobroges: I can not well point out the place: the walls of Romulus, the habitations of Janus and of Saturn, and the temple of Capitoline Jove, which the confessions I extorted from their ambassadors gave me in my consulate the means of saving, stand at too great a distance from this terrace.

QUINCTUS. Certainly [1] you have much to look back upon, of what is most proper and efficacious to console you. Consciousness of desert protects the mind against obloquy, exalts it above calamity, and scatters into utter invisibility the shadowy fears of death. Nevertheless, O Marcus! to leave behind us our children, if indeed it will be permitted them to stay behind, is painful.

MARCUS. Among the contingencies of life, it is that for which we ought to be best prepared, as the most regular and ordinary in the course of nature. In [2] dying, and leaving our friends, and saying, "I shall see you no more," which is thought by the generous man the painfullest thing in the change he undergoes, we speak as if we shall continue to feel the same desire and want of seeing them. An inconsistency so common as never to have been noticed: and my remark, which you would think too trivial, startles by its novelty before it conciliates by its truth. We bequeath to our children a field illuminated by our glory and enriched by our example: a noble patrimony, and beyond the jurisdiction of prætor or proscriber. Nor indeed is our fall itself without its fruit to them: for violence is the cause why that is often called a calamity which is not, and repairs in some measure its injuries by exciting to commiseration and tenderness. The pleasure a man receives from his children resembles that which, with more propriety than any other,

[1] From "Certainly" to "console you" added in 2nd ed.
[2] From "In" to "truth" added in 3rd ed.

we may attribute to the Divinity: for to suppose that his chief satisfaction and delight should arise from the contemplation of what he has done or can do, is to place him on a level with a runner or a wrestler. The formation of a world, or of a thousand worlds, is as easy to him as the formation of an atom. Virtue and intellect are equally his production; yet he subjects them in no slight degree to our volition. His benevolence is gratified at seeing us conquer our wills and rise superior to our infirmities; and at tracing day after day a nearer resemblance in our moral features to his. We can derive no pleasure but from exertion: he can derive none from it: since exertion, as we understand the word, is incompatible with omnipotence.

QUINCTUS. Proceed, my brother! for in every depression of mind, in every excitement of feeling, my spirits are equalised by your discourse; and that which you said with too much brevity of our children, soothes me greatly.

MARCUS. I am persuaded of the truth in what I have spoken; and yet—ah Quinctus! there is a tear that philosophy can not dry, and a pang that will rise as we approach the Gods.

Two [1] things tend beyond all others, after philosophy, to inhibit and check our ruder passions as they grow and swell in us, and to keep our gentler in their proper play: and these two things are, seasonable sorrow and inoffensive pleasure, each moderately indulged. Nay, there is also a pleasure, humble, it is true, but graceful and insinuating, which follows close upon our very sorrows, reconciles us to them gradually, and sometimes renders us at last undesirous altogether of abandoning them. If ever you have remembered the anniversary of some day whereon a dear friend was lost to you, tell me whether that anniversary was not purer and even calmer than the day before. The sorrow, if there should be any left, is soon absorbed, and full satisfaction takes place of it, while you perform a pious office to Friendship, required and appointed by the ordinances of Nature. When my Tulliola was torn away from me, a thousand plans were in readiness for immortalising her memory, and raising a monument up to the magnitude of my grief. The grief itself has done it: the tears I then shed over her assuaged it in me, and did everything that could be done for her, or hoped, or wished. I called upon Tulliola; Rome and the whole world

[1] From "Two" to "departed" added in 2nd ed.

heard me: her glory was a part of mine and mine of hers; and when Eternity had received her at my hands, I wept no longer. The tenderness wherewith I mentioned and now mention her, though it suspends my voice, brings what consoles and comforts me: it is the milk and honey left at the sepulchre, and equally sweet (I hope) to the departed.

The Gods, who have given us our affections, permit us surely the uses and the signs of them. Immoderate grief, like everything else immoderate, is useless and pernicious; but if we did not tolerate and endure it, if we did not prepare for it, meet it, commune with it, if we did not even cherish it in its season, much of what is best in our faculties, much of our tenderness, much of our generosity, much of our patriotism, much also of our genius, would be stifled and extinguished.

When I hear anyone call upon another to be manly and to restrain his tears, if they flow from the social and kind affections, I doubt the humanity and distrust the wisdom of the counsellor Were he humane, he would be more inclined to pity and to sympathise than to lecture and reprove; and were he wise, he would consider that tears are given us by Nature as a remedy to affliction, although, like other remedies, they should come to our relief in private. Philosophy, we may be told, would prevent the tears by turning away the sources of them, and by raising up a rampart against pain and sorrow. I am of opinion that philosophy, quite pure and totally abstracted from our appetites and passions, instead of serving us the better, would do us little or no good at all. We may receive so much light as not to see, and so much philosophy as to be worse than foolish. I[1] have never had leisure to write all I could have written on the subjects I began to meditate and discuss too late. And where, O Quinctus! where are those men gone, whose approbation would have stimulated and cheered me in the course of them? Little is entirely my own in the *Tusculan Disputations*; for I went rather in search of what is useful than of what is specious, and sat down oftener to consult the wise than to argue with the ingenious. In order to determine what is fairly due to me, you will see, which you may easily, how large is the proportion of the impracticable, the visionary, the baseless, in the philosophers who have gone before me; and how much of application and

[1] From " I " to " domestic state " added in 3rd ed.

judgment, to say nothing of temper and patience, was requisite in making the selection. Aristoteles is the only one of the philosophers I am intimate with (except you extort from me to concede you Epicurus) who never is a dreamer or a trifler, and almost the only one whose language, varying with its theme, is yet always grave and concise, authoritative and stately, neither running into wild dithyrambics, nor stagnating in vapid luxuriance. I have not hesitated, on many occasions, to borrow largely from one who, in so many provinces, hath so much to lend. The whole of what I collected, and the whole of what I laid out from my own, is applicable to the purposes of our political, civil, and domestic state. And my eloquence, whatever (with Pollio's leave) it may be, would at least have sufficed me to elucidate and explore those ulterior tracts, which the Greeks have coasted negligently and left unsettled. Although I think I have done somewhat more than they, I am often dissatisfied with the scantiness of my store and the limit of my excursion. Every question has given me the subject of a new one, which has always been better treated than the preceding; and, like Archimedes, whose tomb appears now before me as when I first discovered it at Syracuse, I could almost ask of my enemy time to solve my problem.

Quinctus! Quinctus! let us exult with joy: there is no enemy to be appeased or avoided. We are moving forward, and without exertion, thither where we shall know all we wish to know, and how greatly more than, whether in Tusculum or in Formiæ, in Rome or in Athens, we could ever hope to learn!

VI. TIBULLUS AND MESSALA

(*Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

TIBULLUS. Messala? this is indeed a delight to me. A visit in Rome would have been little better than an honour.

MESSALA. My dear Tibullus! didst thou not promise me a great reward if I would come to thy villa in the autumn? Confident that no urbanity can escape thy memory or thy performance, here I am.

TIBULLUS. Little, too little, is whatever I could have promised.

MESSALA. Little? didst thou not promise me in presence of all the Muses, that Delia should cull the ripest apples for me? and thou well knowest how fond I always was of them.

TIBULLUS. On the Garumna and on the Liger, after a tedious march, we often found them refreshing.

MESSALA. What then must they be, gathered by the hand of Delia, the beloved of my brave Tibullus?

TIBULLUS. She shall gather them instantly.

Come, Delia! come from behind that curtain. Here is Messala. Do not let his eloquence win thy heart away from me, and forget for a moment all thou hast ever heard about his military actions and his high nobility.

DELIA. Albius! Albius! for shame! how dare you take such a liberty with so great a man as to put my hand into his?

TIBULLUS. Because he is what thou callest him: I take no liberty with any other.

MESSALA. Albius Tibullus! I never thought thee such a flatterer before. Were I in power, or in favour with the powerful, thou wouldst be more discreet and silent. Neither the heir of Julius, nor his bosom friend the patron of poets, have ever won a verse or a visit from thee.

TIBULLUS. And never shall, though each of them I believe hath his merit. Was it to either I owe the preservation of half my patrimony? of this villa? of the apple that is growing on the tree for thee? Friends who watch over us are to be thanked; not robbers

who leave us bruised on the road, throwing back into our faces a few particles of the booty.

MESSALA. Come along, come along ; let us gather the apple.

TIBULLUS (*to Delia*). He will not hear me ; thanks pain him, much as he loves the grateful. Go on, my Delia.

DELIA. Say more about him before we reach the orchard.

TIBULLUS. His intervention, his authority, his name, saved for us all we have. But come ; we must overtake him : he walks swiftly on.

Messala ! you were always first in the field of battle : I will be up with you in this.

MESSALA. O the active girl ! she has caught thee by the tunic in ten paces.

DELIA. Sir ! sir ! what are you doing ?

MESSALA. My pretty one, I am lifting thee up to gather me two or three of those red and yellow apples : they are better than such as are nearer the bottom of the tree.

Well done ! what ! another, and another, and another ? Throw the next down into the bosom of Albius, who is making a sack of his vest for its reception : and now put one, only one, into thy own.

Behold ! thou art now safe down again. Give me the apple out of its hiding-place.

How she blushes ! Ha ! she runs away.

Albius ! that little girl is the delight of thy youthful years, and will be, I augur, the solace of thy decline.

TIBULLUS. She stands listening behind the statue, pretending to admire it, or to see somewhat in its features she never saw before.

Didst thou hear him, my Delia ? Light of my life ! art thou sorrowful ?

DELIA. I did hear ; I own it. Sorrowful ! no, no.

But how can I hope, sir, to be always a delight to him ? What on earth, as my mother used to say, is always ? I was fifteen years old, and two more are nearly gone, since——

MESSALA. Since Albius was made happy and Delia was made immortal. Is it so ?

DELIA. I must grow old at last !

TIBULLUS. And so must I.

DELIA. Oh ! no, no, no, that can never be.

MESSALA. Lady, it is well to think so : Aurora thought it of

Tithonus. Your ages united are somewhat under mine. Never take such notice of my scanty and grey hairs; frightful as they are, they are truthful.

DELIA. If they seem grey it is only because you are in the sunlight.

MESSALA. Ah Delia! I am much nearer the starlight than the sunlight. Day is fast closing with me. But my life has not been unserviceable to my friends or to my country. Yet what, after all, am I?

Ye glories of the world, how rapidly, how irrevocably, ye depart! Men who have shaken the forum and the senate-house with their eloquence, are soon deserted, soon forgotten. The stoutest are in need of support; and their props are often of the most carious materials. Brief is the glimmer of the sword. The timber of the chariot which hath borne up the conqueror to the Capitol, outlasts him; and the cicada, who lives her three days, lives all her three more merrily than he his proudest.

TIBULLUS. Light are our ashes; our wishes, our hopes, our lives, are lighter. Who then upon earth is great and powerful?

MESSALA. The poet. The poet is the assessor of the Gods: he receives from them, and imparts to whomsoever he chooses, the gift of immortality. It is several years, fair Delia, since Albius wrote a panegyric on me, and you were beginning to try what you could do toward the framework of another.

TIBULLUS. I do not repent that I wrote it, O Messala, though I never wrote anything so badly since. I was almost a boy, and the weight of the matter bore me down.

MESSALA. Certainly it is less excellent, and it ought to be, than what Delia hath since inspired. Tell me, Delia, now we are in confidence and at home all three, do not you think our Albius a fine handsome creature? Come, I will allow you to blush a little, it is so becoming, but not allow you to be silent any longer.

DELIA. Make him answer first whether he really thinks me so; for he would never tell a story to you.

MESSALA. Shame upon him! it appears that he has already told you one so incredible.

DELIA. Morning, noon, and——

MESSALA. Go on, go on.

DELIA. I have spoken.

MESSALA. And you believed him?

DELIA. Rather more at first than now; but never quite. O sir! make him tell the real truth; pray do.

MESSALA. I will answer for Albius that he always proves his word, sooner or later.

DELIA. I do not desire it just at present; I can wait.

Fie, Albius! Albius! do men ever snatch up our hands and kiss them in presence of the great?

MESSALA. Let me intercede and answer for him. In the presence of the happy they do, whether of mortals or Gods.

DELIA. You too are a little in fault, if I may dare to say it. I have not forgotten the apple-tree, sir!

MESSALA. What a memory! Are you certain there may not be something of the fabulous in so remote an occurrence?

TIBULLUS. To-morrow we will retrace our steps, and learn over again this dubious and half-obliterated page of history; what say you, Delia?

DELIA. Ask what says our noble guest. But it will be your turn to-morrow, my Albius, to throw down the apples. It made me tremble all over. There is no reason why we should not go into the orchard at some early hour of the morning, were it only to see whether any thieves have broken in; for they do not heed the dogs, although loose.

Audacious! audacious! and you smile, do you? Ah! you may well look down. Certain men have methods of making dogs lie quiet, when they resolve on committing a robbery in the dark. I have half a mind to tell Messala of somebody I know, very sly and treacherous, who, within my recollection, made even Molossians lie quiet and forget their duty. You blush; that is proper. Well, perhaps I may let you off this once, and say nothing about it now you are penitent. Beside, it was a good while ago, and not here. Mother thought it was witchcraft, and she lustrated the house with eggs and sulphur.

MESSALA. If any task is to be imposed on him, order him to write another elegy, complaining of your severity and atoning for his offence. Apollo will punish him for extolling me above my merits by making him inadequate to yours.

Tibullus! it occurs to me that he, whom I have heard you mention as the best poet of the present day, wrote two poems in his

youth such as I wonder he should acknowledge and republish; the *Culex* and the *Ceiris*.

TIBULLUS. He compensated for them soon after, by verses more harmonious than ever had been heard before in our tongue. How beautiful are those at the commencement of the first eclogue, and those of the goatherd at the close of it; and those to Lycoris traversing the Alps, in the last!

MESSALA. You have cited the few verses worth remembrance. He says somewhere that Apollo pulled his ear and admonished him. The God should have pulled it again, and harder, for neglecting his admonition when he composed his *Pollio*. He did indeed take away from him on that one occasion the gift of harmony.

TIBULLUS. Restored soon. How admirable are some passages in that poem on husbandry, which he has given us lately.

MESSALA. Admirable in parts, but disproportionate. In the exordium he has amplified Varro's Portico, which already was too spacious for the edifice.

TIBULLUS. Indeed there was exordium quite sufficient at

Teque sibi generum Tethys emat omnibus undis [1];

which would be followed appropriately by the distant line

Da facilem cursum.

MESSALA. What think you of the Scorpion drawing his arms in, that Octavius may have room enough? or the despair of Tartarus at missing such a treasure? or the backwardness of Proserpine to follow her mother? Here are together eight such verses as I would give eighty bushels of wheat to eradicate from the poetry of a friend. The Greeks by the facility of their versification are often verbose and languid, but they never exhaust so much breath before they start. A husbandman does his work badly with a buskin fastened round the ancle, and an ampulla swinging at the girdle.

Our Mantuan's Winter is unworthy of even a secondary poet: no selection of topics, no arrangement, no continuity; instead of which, there is a dreary conglomeration, where little things and great are confounded. Was ever bathos so profound as in

Æraque dissiliunt vulgo *vestesque rigescunt*, [2]

[1] *Georg.*, i. 31.

[2] *Georg.*, iii. 363.

unless two lines lower, where

> Solidam in glaciem vertêre lacunæ,
> *Stiriaque impexis induruit horrida barbis*

TIBULLUS. Let us climb over the ice and snow, leap across the *lacunæ*, and wipe away the *stiria.* His summer storm is such as Jupiter might have sent down to show his power, and Apollo might have hymned to his father's glory.

MESSALA. Very soon you will take Proteus under your patronage. There are some, I am told, who really find in the story of Eurydice a noble effort of poetry.

TIBULLUS. It grieved me to see that excrescence.

MESSALA. Proteus had no pity for Cyrene, whom he must have known from his infancy, but abundance of it for a dead man's head which he never could have heard of while it was on the shoulders, which head moreover was carried down a river a thousand miles distant from his haunts, and sang all the way. Frigid was indeed the tongue that sang there, and almost as frigid the tongue that sang about it. Such puerility is scarcely for the schoolroom, but rather for the nursery, and comes very nigh the cradle. We have talked about this before, by ourselves, and without any intention of gratifying the malignity of minor songmen.

TIBULLUS. Propertius tells me that he has lately seen the commencement of an epic by him, and that, if the remainder is equal to the two first books, it will rival the Iliad.

MESSALA. May we live to read it! at all events may he to complete it!

TIBULLUS. Pleasant will it be to me to feel the slight shudder of Delia on my bosom when I read to her the battles.

MESSALA. Where is she? she has slipt out.

TIBULLUS. Perhaps she is gone to crown the Penates, for she is pious and grateful.

MESSALA. Two qualities not always found together. Frequently have I remarked, in the most devout, the most arrogant, quarrelsome, and unjust.

Have you room in your chapel for Caius Julius, our latest God?

TIBULLUS. Highly as I esteem him, I have not procured his statue. Gods are great by necessity, mortals by exertion: and what exertions were ever so animated or so unremitted as his?

MESSALA. All of them tended to the glory of his country, out of which parent soil his own shot up exuberantly, and at last (it seems) reached the heavens.

TIBULLUS. In my humble opinion, and I hope I am falling into no impiety when I say it, we have Gods enow already. Those of Egypt [1] we have in our kitchens, and those of Gaul are not worth conveyance from their woods. We require no importations.

MESSALA. Formerly Gods made men; at present men make Gods. Where will this fashion have an end? Perhaps you may live to enlarge your sacristy.

TIBULLUS. I find an object of worship in every field. Wherever there is a stake or a stone crowned with flowers,* I bend before it, and thank the Gods for inspiring the hearts of men with gratitude. I feel confident they are well-pleased at these oblations, however poor their worshipper, and however he mispronounce their names.

MESSALA. While the Gods came from the potter, men were virtuous and happy; when they came from the goldsmith they retained the heat of the furnace, and dazzled and deluded. Priests assumed their similitude, and encrusted one another with the same metal.

TIBULLUS. Barbarous nations have beheld these prodigies; may Rome never see within her walls a worse Pontifex than Caius Julius.

MESSALA. Nevertheless, by his oration in the senate, as Crispus Sallustius hath recorded it, he seems to have verged on atheism. I do not mean hereby to question his aptitude for the office, which others at Rome, after him, have equally well discharged with no firmer belief in the deity, and less resemblance.

TIBULLUS. If you enter our little sanctuary, you will see the Lares not crowned as usual with rosemary and myrtle, but with myrtle only. The reason is: Delia had gathered both from under the villa-wall, to decorate the little deities, inobservant that a bee was inside the blossom of a rosemary, and, beginning to press it round one of the images, she was stung. The sting was forgotten in the omen.

MESSALA. What omen is there in so ordinary an occurrence?

TIBULLUS. "O Albius!" cried she, "something sad will happen, my piety is rejected, and my love, my love——" Sobs interrupted

[1] Cats.

* Nam veneror seu stipes habet desertus in agris,
Seu vetus in trivio florida serta lapis.

her; and she would never tell me afterward what she was then about to say.

MESSALA. Simpleton! But at present there are no signs either of sting or omen. Propertius, whom you just now mentioned, is an imitator of yours, at a distance. His elegies are apparently tasks undertaken by order of a schoolmaster. He is uneasy at the loss of a little farm under Perusia, which the triumvirate allotted to the legions. Civil wars bring down these curses; and not always the most heavily on those who took a prominent part in them. Probably he is more poet than philosopher; and he may never have reflected that many things occur, in the course of every man's life, which he deems unfortunate, and which his friends deem so too, and upon which they not only condole with him at the time, but commemorate and discourse upon long after. Little are they aware that unless these very things had happened, the pleasure they are enjoying at that moment, in social intercourse with him, might not exist. Fortune, who appears to have frowned on him with her worst malignity, in debarring him from that which he groaned for, and was within a step of attaining, may there have been his very best friend. If the farm of Propertius had been larger, it might have cost him his life. Such prices, we know, have been paid occasionally. When in the heat of midsummer I went to visit a neglected property of mine among the hills near Sulmo, I was visited by his friend, Ovidius Naso,* with whose *Epistles of Heroes and Heroines*, on their appearance last winter, you were, I remember, much delighted. He, like the generality of young poets, meditates a grand work; and, unlike the generality, is capable of executing it. Practice itself can hardly add to his facility; and love itself is hardly more ingenious and inventive. He excells in sentences, never dogmatical, never prolix, never inopportune. In every department of eloquence, and particularly in poetry, we look for depth and clearness; a clearness that shows the depth; here we find it.

Before I left Ovidius when I returned his visit, he read to me the

* Tibullus and Propertius, with few more, enjoy the good fortune to escape from mutilation in the extremities of the name. Following the French, but neither the Italians nor Germans, we treat Ovid and Virgil and Horace less ceremoniously; and appear to be more familiar with them than their contemporaries were. It would be affectation in common discourse to say *Virgilius*, or *Ovidius*, or *Horatius*: it would be worse than affectation to represent a Roman saying *Horace*, or *Virgil*, or *Ovid*.—W. S. L.

commencement of some amatory pieces, at which, if I smiled, it was in courtesy, not in approbation. From the mysteries of religion the veil is seldom to be drawn, from the mysteries of love never. For this offence the Gods take away from us our freshness of heart and our susceptibility of pure delight. The well loses the spring that fed it, and what is exposed in the shallow basin soon evaporates. I wish well to Ovidius, for he speaks well of everybody. Poets are enrolled in the Cadmean legion: each one cuts down his comrade: but Ovidius stands apart, gentle and generous, uniting the moral to the sensual voluptuary. He is kinder to Propertius than Horatius Flaccus is, who turns him into ridicule under the name of Callimachus. Our pleasant lyrist is disposed to praise nobody at a distance from the Palatine.

TIBULLUS. Judicious in his choice, he praises Virgilius and Valgius and Varius and Tucca. In his Satires he is equally discreet, equally refined. Satire ought to strike at the face, as Cæsar ordered the soldier to do on the field of Pharsalia: far from mortal, the stroke should never be outrageous or repeated. Coarseness and harshness are no proof of strength, as some would fain inculcate. On the contrary, there is no true satire which departs from graceful pleasantry, and which either runs into philosophical sententiousness or acrimonious declamation. Satire draws neither blood nor tears: laughter and blushes are the boundaries of her dominion.

MESSALA. Perfectly just remarks; and Horatius is no violator of them. Many of his Odes are so light, so playful, so graceful, that nothing is comparable to them in the literature of Greece. Seldom is he energetic or impressive; seldomer, even when he attempts it, pathetic. He who tickles the bosom is the least likely to touch the heart. I could pardon him a few of his deficiencies, if he were less parsimonious of praise toward men like you, and if his nymphs poured less of cold water into the cup containing it.

TIBULLUS. Conscious of his own merits, as every man who possesses any must be, however he may dissemble it, Horatius can ill endure that Catullus and Calvus should be preferred to him,[1] as they are by many.

MESSALA. I think I have allowed him all his due.

TIBULLUS. Not quite: add also his great variety. Recent or ancient, surely none is comparable to him in this.

[1] See Hor., *Sat.*, i. 10. 16.

MESSALA. In the stock of his Gynæcæum, none. Seriously, it is a pity that he who, on his Tiburtine and Sabine farm, is master of so many true and solid, should in worse wantonness have devised so many fabulous mistresses. It takes away from us all illusion, all sympathy: we laugh at an Ixion raising a cloud to embrace it. But is there any man, Albius, who can read without tenderness your *Te spectem?* Believe me, you are the only elegiac poet, Greek or Roman, whom Posterity will cherish. Imperishable are those things only which have been created in the heart.

TIBULLUS. Forget not then your favourite Catullus, the creator there.

MESSALA. Earnest and impressive, no poet rests so perfectly on the memory. He is the only one whose verses I could remember after the first reading; I mean his hendecasyllables and scazons.

TIBULLUS. Painful, very painful is it, that the lover of Lesbia should revile her so coarsely as he did before he left her; if indeed he ever left her at all, or ever possessed her. For it appears to me quite impossible that a tender heart, however rancorous it may have become under infidelities and indignities, should ever lose its fineness of fibre, should ever sink into deep corruption. Willingly then would I believe that many of his poems, as you suppose of Horatius's, are merely exercises of ingenuity.

MESSALA. In the elegiac measure, excepting the verses on his brother's funeral, he was less successful. Ovidius hath utterly ruined it. Of all metres, the pentameter is the least harmonious, and the least adapted to the expression of sorrow, to which Mimnermous and Tyrtæus and Solon never applied it. Frisky as it is, it is not frisky enough for Ovidius. With better judgment, you correct the gambols of the first hemistych by the gravity of the spondee: he, wherever he can, renders it dactylic. Often have I defended him against the charge of affectation, but there is no defence for it in terminating every pentameter with a dissyllable. This is a trick unworthy of a school-boy: Catullus and you have scorned it: Propertius hath followed your example: the Genius of our language cries out against the entanglement, and snaps the chain.

TIBULLUS. That bust in the corner of the room is the bust of Lucretius; and I know not whether there is any other of him: I bought it at the decease of his widow.

MESSALA. How different from the opposite! poor Cicero's. He

always carried anxiety and hurry in his countenance: that little head of his appears as if it never could lie down to rest.

TIBULLUS. I saw him but once, and it was shortly before his departure. Lucretius I never saw at all.

MESSALA. I wish he had abstained from his *induperator* and *endogredi*. Language is as much corrupted by throwing decayed words into it as by the rank and vapid succulence of yesterday's sudden growth. If part is ancient, let all be ancient. When Lucretius complains of our poverty in language, he means only in terms of art and science. Let us stand up for its dignity, and appeal to Plautus for its responsibility. Cicero and Cæsar have brought it to perfection; there are already signs of its decline. Many of those who were educated at Athens have introduced lately a variety of hellenisms: the young poets are too fond of them: among your merits is abstinence from this (not very unpardonable) intoxication.

Plautus and Terentius, who drew largely from Greek originals, are less Greek in their phraseology than many who write now. Lucretius I see is lying on the table. Ovidius, who admires even his contemporaries, is a warm admirer of him, and declares that his work on Nature will perish only with Nature herself. Nothing is so animated and so august as his invocation. His friend Memmius outlived him; but not long enough to see the termination of those discords which he prayed Mars, at the intercession of Venus, to abate. Little did he imagine that a youth who claims descent from her should be enabled to compose them. Octavius was then a boy, thirteen or fourteen years old, just sent by the munificence of his uncle, Caius Julius, to study at Athens. Happily he found there a protector, in a wealthy and clever though dissolute friend a few years older, Cilnius Mecænas, to whose counsels he owes probably his life, certainly his station and security.

TIBULLUS. It is the glory of Mecænas to have derived no part of his riches from the proscriptions.

MESSALA. He had large estates in the most fertile districts of Etruria: but that is no diminution of his merit: others as affluent were rapacious and insatiable. His weakness, one among many, lies in his affectation of family. Were he really a descendant of a Lucumon, the pedigree would have been drawn out and exhibited: indeed it is a wonder that a fictitious one never was substituted. Flaccus says that his ancestors, both maternal and paternal, had

formerly commanded "great legions." There is no record of these great legions having performed great actions. If they ever had, he would have pointed to them and have named the battle-field. He has not omitted to tell us who slew Asdrubal, nor the name of the river on whose banks he fell. He brings forward his patron's royal origin on every occasion, and truly with small dexterity. It seldom or never has anything to do with the subject. Take for instance the first ode; the worst in the book, excepting the second. And there are other places quite as remarkable for a similar want of connection.

TIBULLUS. With various little weaknesses he is really an estimable man, although it never may have occurred to him that no one has a right to claim antiquity of family unless he can distinctly show an ancestor who hath rendered a signal service to the commonwealth.

MESSALA. To Cilnius however it is mainly owing that our manners are softened, our dissensions pacified, our laws amended, and the remainder of our properties secured.

TIBULLUS. And commonwealth? The old nut has only a maggot and dust within it; and the squirrel at the top of the tree, having laid up or eaten all the sounder, thinks it ill worth while to come down and crack it.

We are safe at present; and that is somewhat: but who on earth can insure us that Thracian or Dacian, or Gaul or German, shall not, within a century or two, advance on Rome?

MESSALA. Blindness is the effect of straining the eye too far. Empires have fallen, and will fall: the harder crush the softer and soften too. Destruction and renovation are eternal laws. A decayed nation, like a decayed animal, fattens the field for enterprize and industry. Egyptians, Babylonians, Medes, the mountaineers of Macedon and Epirus, have vanquished in succession, and now are lying like idle and outcast beggars at the gates of Rome. Albius! be certain of this: if we ever lose our preponderance we shall deserve to lose it. A weak nation, when it is reduced to subjection, may be pitied; but a nation once powerful by its institutions, military and civil, when it falls, although short of subjugation, is despised. The genius of Julius Cæsar, a man without an equal in the history of the world, would have restored our State. Generals whose sole ability lay in the arts of corruption were opposed to him; and, fortunately for the senate who appointed them, they failed. In

Spain and Africa there still breathed a military spirit; but in his presence it breathed its last. Antonius and Cassius were the only great leaders who survived him: Cassius outlived his cause; Antonius his glory. Agrippa, when he had driven him into Pelusium and upon his sword, turned his heel on the luxuries of Egypt, stood aloof from those of Rome, and was venerated at his death greatly more than those who have recently been deified.

Repose is necessary now to our exhaustion. We must look carefully to our agriculture; we must conciliate our provinces. In no case, however, is military discipline to be neglected, or the soldier to be kept long inactive. We will enjoy the Saturnian age when Saturn comes back again: meanwhile, let us never be forgetful that Mars is the progenitor of our race.

VII. TIBERIUS AND VIPSANIA *

(*Imag. Convers.*, iii., 1828; *Wks.*, i., 1846; *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

TIBERIUS. Vipsania, my Vipsania, whither art thou walking?

VIPSANIA. Whom do I see? my Tiberius?

TIBERIUS. Ah! no, no, no! but thou seest the father of thy little Drusus. Press him to thy heart the more closely for this meeting, and give him——

VIPSANIA. Tiberius! the altars, the Gods, the destinies, are between us—I will take it from this hand [1]; thus, thus shall he receive it.

TIBERIUS. Raise up thy face, my beloved! I must not shed tears. Augustus! Livia! ye shall not extort them from me. Vipsania! I may kiss thy head—for I have saved it. Thou sayest nothing. I have wronged thee; ay?

VIPSANIA. Ambition does not see the earth she treads on: the rock and the herbage are of one substance to her. Let me excuse you to my heart, O Tiberius. It has many wants; this is the first and greatest.

* Vipsania, the daughter of Agrippa, was divorced from Tiberius by Augustus and Livia, in order that he might marry Julia; and hold the empire by inheritance. He retained such an affection for her, and showed it so intensely when he once met her afterward, that every precaution was taken lest they should meet again.

There [1] can be no doubt that the Claudii were deranged in intellect. Those of them who succeeded to the empire were by nature no worse than several of their race in the times of the republic. Appius Claudius, Appius Cœcus, Publius, Appia, and after these the enemy of Cicero, exhibited as ungovernable a temper as the imperial ones, some breaking forth into tyranny and lust, others into contempt of, and imprecations against, their country. Tiberius was meditative, morose, suspicious. In the pupil of Seneca were dispositions the opposite to these, with many talents, and some good qualities. They could not disappear on a sudden without one of those shocks under which had been engulfed almost every member of the family.—W. S. L.

[1] 1st ed. reads: "hand of thine, and thus shall."

[1] Note in 1st ed. reads: "I have mentioned in a former volume my persuasion that the Claudii were deranged in intellect."

TIBERIUS. My ambition, I swear by the immortal Gods, placed not the bar of severance between us. A stronger hand, the hand that composes Rome and sways the world——

VIPSANIA. —Overawed Tiberius. I know it; Augustus willed and commanded it.

TIBERIUS. And overawed Tiberius! Power bent, Death terrified, a Nero! What is our race, that any should look down on us and spurn us! Augustus, my benefactor, I have wronged thee! Livia, my mother, this one cruel deed was thine! To reign forsooth is a lovely thing! O womanly appetite! Who would have been before me, though the palace of Cæsar cracked and split with emperors, while I, sitting in idleness on a cliff of Rhodes, eyed the sun as he swang his golden censer athwart the heavens, or his image as it overstrode the sea.* I have it before me; and though it seems falling on me, I can smile at it; just as I did from my little favourite skiff, painted round with the marriage of Thetis, when the sailors drew their long shaggy hair across their eyes, many a stadium away from it, to mitigate its effulgence.[1]

These too were happy days: days of happiness like these I could recall and look back upon with unaching brow.

O land of Greece! Tiberius blesses thee, bidding thee rejoice and flourish.

Why can not one hour, Vipsania, beauteous and light as we have led, return?

VIPSANIA. Tiberius! is it to me that you were speaking? I would not interrupt you; but I thought I heard my name as you walked away and looked up toward the East. So silent!

TIBERIUS. Who dared to call thee? Thou wert mine before the Gods—do they deny it? Was it my fault——

VIPSANIA. Since we are separated, and for ever, O Tiberius, let us think no more on the cause of it. Let neither of us believe that the other was to blame: so shall separation be less painful.

* The Colossus was thrown down by an earthquake during the war between Antiochus and Ptolemy, who sent the Rhodians three thousand talents for the restoration of it. Again in the time of Vespasian, "Coæ Veneris, item *Colossi* refectorem congiario magnâque mercede donavit." *Suetonius in Vesp.* The first residence of Tiberius in Rhodes was when he returned from his Armenian expedition, the last was after his divorce from Vipsania and his marriage with Julia.—W. S. L. [Not in 1st ed.]

[1] 1st ed. reads: "effulgence from the brightest effigy of the brightest God. These," etc.

TIBERIUS. O mother! and did I not tell thee what she was? patient in injury, proud in innocence, serene in grief!

VIPSANIA. Did you say that too? but I think it was so: I had felt little. One[1] vast wave has washed away the impression of smaller from my memory. Could Livia, could your mother, could she who was so kind to me——

TIBERIUS. The wife of Cæsar did it. But hear me now, hear me: be calm as I am. No weaknesses are such as those of a mother who loves her only son immoderately; and none are so easily worked upon from without. Who knows what impulses she received? She is very, very kind; but she regards me only; and that which at her bidding is to encompass and adorn me. All the weak look after power, protectress of weakness. Thou art a woman, O Vipsania! is there nothing in thee to excuse my mother? So good she ever was to me! so loving!

VIPSANIA. I quite forgive her: be tranquil, O Tiberius!

TIBERIUS. Never can I know peace—never can I pardon—any-one. Threaten me with thy exile, thy separation, thy seclusion! remind me that another climate might endanger thy health!—There death met me and turned me round. Threaten me to take our son from us! our one boy! our helpless little one! him whom we made cry because we kissed him both together. Rememberest thou? or dost thou not hear? turning thus away from me!

VIPSANIA. I hear; I hear. O cease, my sweet Tiberius! Stamp not upon that stone: my heart lies under it.

TIBERIUS. Ay, there again death, and more than death, stood before me. Oh she maddened me, my mother did, she maddened me—she threw me to where I am at one breath. The Gods can not replace me where I was, nor atone to me, nor console me, nor restore my senses. To whom can I fly? to whom can I open my heart? to whom speak plainly? * There was upon the earth a man I could converse with, and fear nothing: there was a woman too I could love, and fear nothing. What a soldier, what a Roman, was thy father, O my young bride! How could those who never saw him have discoursed so rightly upon virtue!

[1] 1st ed. reads: "One wave has washed away a thousand impressions of smaller from my memory."

* The regret of Tiberius at the death of Agrippa may be imagined to arise from a cause of which at this moment he was unconscious. If Agrippa had lived, Julia, who was his wife, could not have been Tiberius's, nor would he and Vipsania have been separated.—W. S. L. [Not in 1st ed.]

VIPSANIA. These words cool my breast like pressing his urn against it. He was brave: shall Tiberius want courage?

TIBERIUS. My enemies scorn me. I am a garland dropped from a triumphal car, and taken up and looked on for the place I occupied: and tossed away and laughed at. Senators! laugh, laugh! Your merits may be yet rewarded—be of good cheer! Counsel me, in your wisdom, what services I can render you, conscript fathers!

VIPSANIA. This seems mockery: Tiberius did not smile so, once.

TIBERIUS. They had not then congratulated me.

VIPSANIA. On what?

TIBERIUS. And it was not because she was beautiful, as they thought her, and virtuous as I know she is, but because the flowers on the altar were to be tied together by my heart-string. On this they congratulated me. Their day will come. Their sons and daughters are what I would wish them to be: worthy to succeed them.[1]

VIPSANIA. Where is that quietude, that resignation, that sanctity, that heart of true tenderness?

TIBERIUS. Where is my love? my love?

VIPSANIA. Cry not thus aloud, Tiberius! there is an echo in the place. Soldiers and slaves may burst in upon us.

TIBERIUS. And see my tears? There is no echo, Vipsania! why alarm and shake me so? We are too high here for the echoes: the city is below us. Methinks it trembles and totters: would it did! from the marble quays of the Tiber to this rock. There is a strange buzz and murmur in my brain; but I should listen so intensely, I should hear the rattle of its roofs, and shout with joy.

VIPSANIA. Calm, O my life! calm this horrible transport.

TIBERIUS. Spake I so loud? Did I indeed then send my voice after a lost sound, to bring it back; and thou fanciedest it an echo? Wilt not thou laugh with me, as thou wert wont to do, at such an error? What was I saying to thee, my tender love, when I commanded—I know not whom—to stand back, on pain of death? Why starest thou on me in such agony? Have I hurt thy fingers, child? I loose them; now let me look! Thou turnest thine eyes away from me. Oh! oh! I hear my crime! Immortal Gods! I cursed then[2] audibly, and before the sun, my mother!

[1] 1st ed. reads: "them, and ready too. I would not make them love me, as they must do, for it: but this will pass away."

[2] Crump reads "them," disastrously.

VIII. EPICTETUS AND SENECA

(*Imag. Convers.*, iii., 1828; *Wks.*, ii., 1846: *Imag. Convers. Gk. and Rom.*, 1853; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

SENECA. Epictetus! I desired your master Epaphroditus to send you hither, having been much pleased with his report of your conduct, and much surprised at the ingenuity of your writings.

EPICTETUS. Then I am afraid, my friend——

SENECA. *My friend!* are these the expressions—— Well, let it pass. Philosophers must bear bravely. The people expect it.

EPICTETUS. Are philosophers then only philosophers for the people? and, instead of instructing them, must they play tricks before them? Give me rather the gravity of dancing dogs. Their motions are for the rabble; their reverential eyes and pendent paws are under the pressure of awe at a master; but they are dogs, and not below their destinies.

SENECA. Epictetus! I will give you three talents to let me take that sentiment for my own.

EPICTETUS. I would give thee twenty, if I had them, to make it thine.

SENECA. You mean, by lending to it the graces of my language.

EPICTETUS. I mean, by lending it to thy conduct. And now let me console and comfort thee, under the calamity I brought on thee by calling thee *my friend.* If thou art not my friend, why send for me? Enemy I can have none: being a slave, Fortune has now done with me.

SENECA. Continue then your former observations. What were you saying?

EPICTETUS. That which thou interruptedst.

SENECA. What was it?

EPICTETUS. I should have remarked that, if thou foundest ingenuity in my writings, thou must have discovered in them some deviation from the plain homely truths of Zeno and Cleanthes.

SENECA. We all swerve a little from them.

EPICTETUS. In practice too?

SENECA. Yes, even in practice, I am afraid.

EPICTETUS. Often?

SENECA. Too often.

EPICTETUS. Strange! I have been attentive, and yet have remarked but one difference among you great personages at Rome.

SENECA. What difference fell under your observation?

EPICTETUS. Crates and Zeno and Cleanthes taught us, that our desires were to be subdued by philosophy alone. In this city, their acute and inventive scholars take us aside, and show us that there is not only one way, but two.

SENECA. Two ways?

EPICTETUS. They whisper in our ear, "These two ways are philosophy and enjoyment: the wiser man will take the readier, or, not finding it, the alternative." Thou reddenest.

SENECA. Monstrous degeneracy.

EPICTETUS. What magnificent rings![1] I did not notice them until thou liftedst up thy hands to heaven, in detestation of such effeminacy and impudence.

SENECA. The rings are not amiss: my rank rivets them upon my fingers: I am forced to wear them. Our emperor gave me one, Epaphroditus another, Tigellinus the third. I cannot lay them aside a single day, for fear of offending the Gods, and those whom they love the most worthily.

EPICTETUS. Although they make thee stretch out thy fingers, like the arms and legs of one of us slaves upon a cross.

SENECA. O horrible! Find some other resemblance.

EPICTETUS. The extremities of a fig-leaf.

SENECA. Ignoble!

EPICTETUS. The claws of a toad, trodden on or stoned.

SENECA. You have great need, Epictetus, of an instructor in eloquence and rhetoric: you want topics and tropes and figures.

EPICTETUS. I have no room for them. They make such a buzz in the house, a man's own wife can not understand what he says to her.

SENECA. Let us reason a little upon style. I would set you right, and remove from before you the prejudices of a somewhat rustic education. We may adorn the simplicity of the wisest.

EPICTETUS. Thou canst not adorn simplicity. What is naked or

[1] 1st ed. reads (after "rings"): "Pardon me!"

defective is susceptible of decoration: what is decorated is simplicity no longer. Thou mayest give another thing in exchange for it; but if thou wert master of it, thou wouldst preserve it inviolate. It is no wonder that we mortals, little able as we are to see truth, should be less able to express it.

SENECA. You have formed at present no idea of style.

EPICTETUS. I never think about it First I consider whether what I am about to say is true; then whether I can say it with brevity, in such a manner as that others shall see it as clearly as I do in the light of truth; for if they survey it as an ingenuity, my desire is ungratified, my duty unfulfilled. I[1] go not with those who dance round the image of Truth, less out of honour to her than to display their agility and address.

SENECA. We must attract the attention of readers by novelty and force and grandeur of expression.

EPICTETUS. We must. Nothing is so grand as truth, nothing so forcible, nothing so novel.

SENECA. Sonorous sentences are wanted, to awaken the lethargy of indolence.

EPICTETUS. Awaken it to what? Here lies the question; and a weighty one it is. If thou awakenest men where they can see nothing and do no work, it is better to let them rest: but will not they, thinkest thou, look up at a rainbow, unless they are called to it by a clap of thunder?

SENECA. Your early youth, Epictetus, has been I will not say neglected, but cultivated with rude instruments and unskilful hands.

EPICTETUS. I thank God for it. Those rude instruments have left the turf lying yet toward the sun; and those unskilful hands have plucked out[2] the docks.

SENECA. We hope and believe that we have attained a vein of eloquence, brighter and more varied than has been hitherto laid open to the world.

EPICTETUS. Than any in the Greek?

SENECA. We trust so.

EPICTETUS. Than your Cicero's?

SENECA. If the declaration may be made without an offence to modesty. Surely you can not estimate or value the eloquence of that noble pleader.

[1] From "I" to "address" added in 2nd ed. [2] 1st ed. reads: "out only."

EPICTETUS. Imperfectly; not being born in Italy; and the noble pleader is a much less man with me than the noble philosopher. I regret that having farms and villas, he would not keep his distance from the pumping up of foul words, against thieves, cut-throats, and other rogues: and that he lied, sweated, and thumped his head and thighs, in behalf of those who were no better.

SENECA. Senators must have clients, and must protect them.

EPICTETUS. Innocent or guilty?

SENECA. Doubtless.

EPICTETUS. If[1] it becomes a philosopher to regret at all, and if I regret what is, and might not be, I may regret more what both is and must be. However it is an amiable thing, and no small merit in the wealthy, even to trifle and play at their leisure hours with philosophy. It can not be expected that such a personage should espouse her, or should recommend her as an inseparable mate to his heir.

SENECA. I would.

EPICTETUS. Yes, Seneca, but thou hast no son to make the match for; and thy recommendation, I suspect, would be given him before he could consummate the marriage. Every man wishes his sons to be philosophers while they are young; but takes especial care, as they grow older, to teach them its insufficiency and unfitness for their intercourse with mankind. The paternal voice says, "You must not be particular: you are about to have a profession to live by: follow those who have thriven the best in it." Now among these, whatever be the profession, canst thou point out to me one single philosopher?

SENECA. Not just now. Nor, upon reflection, do I think it feasible.

EPICTETUS. Thou indeed mayest live much to thy ease and satisfaction with philosophy, having (they say) two thousand talents.

SENECA. And a trifle to spare—pressed upon me by that godlike youth, my pupil Nero.

EPICTETUS. Seneca! where God hath placed a mine, he hath placed the materials of an earthquake.

SENECA. A true philosopher is beyond the reach of Fortune.

EPICTETUS. The false one thinks himself so. Fortune cares little about philosophers; but she remembers where she hath set a rich man, and she laughs to see the Destinies at his door.

[1] 1st ed. reads: "If I regret," etc.; and "may" for "might."

IX. VIRGILIUS AND HORATIUS

ON THE ROAD TO BRUNDUSIUM, WITH AUGUSTUS AND MECÆNAS[1]

(*Athenæum*, 1861 ; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

VIRGILIUS. Horatius ! raise yourself up from the litter and look before you. From this last spur of the Apennines, I discover the Adriatic beyond Brundusium.

HORATIUS. Let me wipe my eyes first, for the keen air of the mountain and the eastern breeze have made them water, and they are not so clearsighted at the best as yours are. I would fain have turned myself round a few hours later. I am no Persian ; seldom do I salute the sun, and never at his ascension. There is, methinks, blue in the distance, whether sea or cloud. Heartily glad shall I be when we reach Brundusium. The ribs of yon lean cattle bear a journey best. We liquefy like the waxwork of a witch.

VIRGILIUS. Yonder we shall have leisure to reflect, on the cities, municipalities, and scenery left behind us, and to meditate on what has occurred within our own memory at the seaport to which we are going, and on the fate of those commanders who sailed thence with their armies and adherents.

HORATIUS. Miserable fate indeed for most of them : but, without that miserable fate of theirs, you would never have recovered your little field of buttercups on the marsh of Mantua, nor on me would have been bestowed the snug white cottage overlooking the crags of Tusculum.

VIRGILIUS. Have you never sighed about your paternal heritage, Venusian or Apulian ? I think you have expressed a doubt by which of these names you ought to call it.

HORATIUS. By Bacchus ! a sigh would have blown away all that

[1] Landor's spelling in the *Athenæum*.

property. My sighs I reserve for my poetry, as most poets do. I lived in the town; and a dirty town it is. My shoe never shall stick in its mud again. The best of fathers sent me early in life to Athens. There I was wild for freedom, as the most generous and intelligent boys are apt to be; for neither generosity nor intelligence are necessarily prudent, though intelligence may look grave and appear so. Marcus Brutus was my hero. I followed him to battle. Having money in my pouch, I was made a captain. You know the sequence. Looking at me now, you might hardly think I could run away: but remember, Apollo has wings to his shoulders, and Mercury to his feet. Each of them lent me aid.

VIRGILIUS. You do not appear to be so tired by our journey as I am.

HORATIUS. Yet I have more weight to carry. However, let me confess to you that I shall be rejoiced at reaching the city. There, when we have rested, we may talk about the vicissitudes of the world, of cities devastated and reduced to mounds of earth, of Thebes and Mycenæ, of Sybaris and Croton, of nations once opulent, now the haunt of boars and wolves.

VIRGILIUS. Rome itself, for many centuries, lay in the same condition. The Etrurians abandoned it from the increasing insalubrity of the air. A band of robbers took possession of the hills and dilapidated walls and roofless houses. They made incursions on the Latins and Sabines, and seized their cattle and their wives. About a hundred freebooters were strong enough to resist a thousand or more of husbandmen unaccustomed to war. Presently they were joined by lawless men from all quarters, to whom they alone could give laws.

HORATIUS. If the Senate were now in full feather and with claws unclipped, it would peck out your eyes for thus tracing its origin. History has in vain attempted to cover and conceal it. Cato has traced the Etrurians far beyond it; but he shut his eyes on the origin of Rome. He was too patriotic to speak fairly. He was a strict observer of religion, as were his progenitors. They made use of all the Gods they found in the cities they had taken. Many yokes of oxen were insufficient to transport them into Rome from Veii. You want only Ceres and Pales to overlook your husbandry, with Jupiter to assist them occasionally with a shower.

VIRGILIUS. We two may indulge in pleasantry, but be careful to

abstain from touching the popular belief in any deity. If those among them who are beneficent become discarded, the people may return to Saturn, to whom no altar is now dedicated, and to Diana, such as she was supplicated at Aulis on the sacrifice of Iphigenia. Let them be contented with the Gods who are pacified with a few bunches of flowers and a few plates of fruit, with a slice of bread to make it wholesome.

HORATIUS. My mouth begins to water at the thought of them. I hope breakfast will be ready soon. The country hereabout is fertile in fruit-trees. Blessings on Lucullus! the wisest and most provident of conquerors. He brought from Armenia the apricot and cherry, and the peach from the confines of Persia.

VIRGILIUS. Some of these we shall probably find on the table in another hour.

HORATIUS. Or I shall raise an outcry. In your *Georgics* you discourse largely on the better sorts of apples and pears, which indeed are more excellent in Italy than elsewhere, but not a word about those richer fruits, worthy to crown the table of Xerxes and Darius. In regard to them, the Greeks were barbarians. When I see them before me, I do not repeat—

Persicos odi, puer, apparatus.

VIRGILIUS. That is a sweet little ode of yours. Valerius Catullus was the first who introduced among us the Sapphic metre, and he uses it only twice or thrice, copying her best. You excell her infinitely, both in the variety and in the quality of yours. But, my dear Horatius, what induced you to be for once ungracious, and to throw a pebble at your neighbour of Verona?

HORATIUS. Where have I done it?

VIRGILIUS. Remember your verse—

Nil præter Calvum et doctus cantare Catullum.[1]

HORATIUS. It is unpleasant to be shoved away when we are walking up toward others who are before us.

VIRGILIUS. Acknowledge that we may sing an old song without reproach or reproof. No poet, Roman or Greek, is nearly so graceful as these two. The scazons of Catullus are perfect. Some prefer his phaleucics: I do not, beautiful as they are. You have composed

[1] *Sat.*, i. 10. 19.

more grandly. Be contented with having written better odes than rattled by the chariot-wheels of Pindar, and do not fear that you are—

vitreo daturus nomina ponto.[1]

HORATIUS. I found in the metre of Alcæus enormous difficulties to overcome, and in these I exerted all my strength. The dithyrambic is unsuitable to the genius of our poetry. It admits and requires compound words, over which Ennius alone had the mastery. You have taken from him, in the few pages of that grand poem which you permitted me to read, *omnipotens* and *armipotens*.

VIRGILIUS. We must be parsimonious of wealth long hoarded, and open the treasury but seldom, nor for other than solemn occasions. There are two young poets who abstain from it, although one of them is somewhat rash here and there.

HORATIUS. Who are they?

VIRGILIUS. Ovidius Naso and Albius Tibullus.

HORATIUS. I know Albius a little, shy as he is of company. He was the companion and friend of Messala during the late wars in Gaul: but his placid temper leads him to the retirement of a country life and the enjoyment of his Delia. He excells both Catullus and Ovid in the elegiac. His preference of the spondee as one foot in the first hemistyc of the pentameter is judicious. Ovidius is too frequently dactylic in it. Solon and Tyrtæus have left us the earliest specimens. The polysyllabic close renders the verse more animated. In Ovidius it gambols; in Tibullus it murmurs like the ring-dove.

VIRGILIUS. Ovidius, a short time ago,[2] recited to me several passages of a poem on the Transformation of men and women into flowers and other things. I was surprised at his ingenuity and facility of versification, and greatly more at a contest of Ulysses and Ajax for the armour of Achilles, quite Homeric.

HORATIUS. When you have completed your grand epic, now so successfully begun, we shall see Homer's rival. Your commencement of the Æneid is equal to his of the Iliad, which, indeed, is the continuation of another song, and probably of another singer, but Homer's composition. Who was the Goddess he invoked? All the Goddesses might contend for it, as three did not long before in the same region. In the first sentence he says that the bodies of the

[1] *Carm.*, iv 2-3.

[2] But Ovid at this date was a child.

Greeks were left a prey to dogs and *all* birds. Now there are many birds which would have kept aloof, having no taste for flesh, and a salutary fear of dogs and vultures. Some other word than πασι would have been more appropriate; perhaps it was a verb. The dogs themselves, I suspect, would rather have tucked up their legs under their bodies at home than have crossed the Grecian camp.

VIRGILIUS. Here I accede to your proposition: but I differ widely from you when you say, *aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*. Attentive as I have always been to him, I have never caught him asleep, or other than wide awake. You may discover a dozen or twenty epithets which the verse rather than the sense required, some of them inappropriate.

HORATIUS. You have done wonders with a language so inflexible as ours, in which the close of almost every heroic verse [1] is either a dissyllable or trisyllable.

VIRGILIUS. The rich may indulge in superfluities. The Ionian muse is somewhat too fond of playing voluntaries.

HORATIUS. Your first and second books are prodigies of genius. Continue, and you will have recorded the most memorable events of the most memorable nations, and have turned the eyes of future ages back toward them. Apollo and Neptune by their united power raised the walls of Troy; Virgilius, single-handed, will have raised an imperishable Rome.

[1] Landor's manuscript correction is here followed. Forster and Crump read: "in which almost every heroic verse," etc.

X. ASINIUS POLLIO AND LICINIUS CALVUS

(*Fraser's Mag.*, 1855; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

CALVUS. Welcome, thrice welcome, to our beautiful lake again, O Pollio. Benacus smiles at Sirmio, and Sirmio at Benacus, on this happy day.

POLLIO. Certainly, my friend Calvus, the water is calm, the sky serene, and the little promontory seems to revel in their enjoyment.

CALVUS. We have been expecting you all the month, and we began to doubt whether you had not joined the party in the journey to Brundusium.

POLLIO. Augustus and Mecænas and their poets, could do very well without me. When I travel I am uncomfortable in much company: I require facility of movement and roominess of accommodation.

CALVUS. I know not whether Virgilius Maro has written to you anything. If he has, I hope it is better than the incoherent verses with which he celebrated your son's nativity.

POLLIO. It is seldom that we have seen each other of late. He prefers the Tiber to the Mincius, and laurels to rushes.

CALVUS. He deserves the greenest of the one and the softest of the other, with as many doves and swans as haunt them. I doubt whether he ever visited our neighbour here, Valerius Catullus. They tell me he has written even nobler verses.

POLLIO. It is reported that he is engaged on an epic. Certain it is that in his *Georgics* there are passages more harmonious, larger in sweep and swell, than the noblest of our friend's, in whose best hexameters the ear is at times disappointed, awaiting the fulness of harmony. In the iambic, in the scazon, in the phaleucic, no poet of Italy or Greece is comparable to him, whether in beauty of expression, in tenderness or in terseness. Indeed the Greeks, owing to the wonderful flexibility of their language, run occasionally to waste in poetry; there is too much of slenderness in their grace. The many

thousands of short pieces, which they call *epigrams* or *skolions*, collected in our libraries, are not worth, if put together, a dozen [1] of Catullus. He has, however, a rival in the travelling equipage of Cæsar and Cilnius. Their amiable friend Horatius Flaccus, who, with Virgilius and other songsters of the same aviary, was carried in one cage with them to Brundusium, has given us in verse a description of the voyage. On reading it I exclaimed in my piety, *Thanks O ye Gods and Goddesses! I was not of the party.*

CALVUS. The description is often delightful where what is described is greatly the reverse.

POLLIO. Flaccus has an abundance of wit, yet it seems to have been all shaken out of him and scattered and lost upon the road. Never was anything duller than this little journal.

CALVUS. And yet what charming odes he has written!

POLLIO. No poet so many of such various merit. Those which he has composed in the metre of Alcæus far excell the best of his master in choice of subject; that is, in celebration of heroism. Judiciously has he chosen this measure, the most sonorous of all the lyrical, for great men and great exploits. A rule which Alcæus has not rigidly observed. With the same sense of propriety and fitness, he usually employs the skittish sapphic on what is light and pleasurable.

CALVUS. And yet poor Sappho herself did not.

POLLIO. She was pleased with a pattern of her own device, and worked it admirably.

CALVUS. It was first introduced into this country by our old friend Valerius, who condescended to translate her best ode [2].

POLLIO. Let me enjoy a look at his villa. Ah! there it stands! Several others appear to have been recently built in its vicinity. Villas should never have any near. Baiæ and Tybur are less pleasing to me than they would be otherwise, for want of privacy.

You know a great deal more about the Benacus and the Sirmio than I do. Cæcilius, the earliest friend of Valerius now living, unless you yourself are, brought me several years ago to visit the lake before us. He was desirous of visiting once more the terrace where the two young poets had contended which of them could run the

[1] 1st ed. reads: "twelve or thirteen."

[2] I follow the text of *Fraser's Mag.* Forster and Crump read: "mode"; 1st ed. gives: "her two best odes."

faster on the feet of verse. They chose the lightest both of construction and of material. On the next day Valerius sent him, from the bedchamber, a few lines which are to be found collected in his volume.

CALVUS. Cæcilius, who never was jealous about his poetry, was very jealous about his lake. "Compare Benacus with Larius! O Calvus! Calvus!"

POLLIO. In truth he was right. However, I begin to think the scenery here as beautiful as ever. We know the munificence of Caius Julius to those who served him faithfully; and it mattered not to him whether they were Gauls or Romans. It was by this equity and impartiality that he conciliated all who served under him. Every brave and intelligent man was recognised by him, and placed where he would be the most efficient. His discernment was unclouded, his justice was unwarped. O Calvus! what do you believe is the reason why the Roman power has been, and continues to be, paramount? It is mainly by this system. Look toward other states, the kingly and the aristocratic, and then consider what it is which has reduced them to a subordinate station under us. It is, the unworthy raised above the worthy; it is, science and energy superseded by birth and rank. The family of Julius, although he had the policy, or perhaps the vanity, of tracing it up even to the Gods, was less ancient than fifty others. He was not invidious of those fifty others; he made use of them as a master; he encouraged them whenever they did good service; but he never rewarded them more highly for it than he would a tribune or a centurion. In the senate he was a Sulla, in the camp he was a Marius.

CALVUS. But would not Sulla have preserved the constitution of his country? Why do you smile, Asinius?

POLLIO. My dear Licinius! there are still poetical visions floating round about your head. Constitution! has the dead man any? Proconsulates and commands were given to the mercenary and rapacious. Military spirit existed yet; and it wafted at last by its strong aspiration a vigorous and a wise man to the Capitol, and the shouts of the soldiery shook down the rotten fabric that encumbered it. States, like men, have their growth, their manhood, their decrepitude, their decay. Caius Julius, even had he been willing, could not have propped up so worm-eaten a fabric. He called stout workmen in, and pulled it down. It was time that something better

should be substituted. No death ever was so deplorable to his country as Cæsar's. I am far from being an admirer of Cicero's policy, much as I admire his eloquence. He excited the murderers of the greatest man the world had ever seen, of the man who would have protected his life and preserved his dignity. He fell by ungrateful hands, as Julius had fallen ; yes, poor Cicero fell by hands equally ungrateful and more ignoble.

Calvus. Neither so vindictive as Sulla nor so sanguinary as Marius, yet Caius Julius cared little for human blood, whether it ran upon the earth or stagnated and corrupted under : and in these sentiments he found congeniality among the Gauls, than whom no people is more indifferent to the duration of life, or less indifferent to its enjoyments. Never had leader more faithful followers, or followers a more indulgent leader. Rise up a moment. Now look at these architectural villas on either side of us. The ground and the materials were given by the bounty of Cæsar ; and one of the proprietors showed me the plan of his, drawn by the very hand of the Dictator. To-morrow, if you please, we will sail under the habitations of these recent occupants. Probably we shall be invited by one or other of them, if they recognise my bark ; for they are as urbane as their illustrious commander; and their sons, now grown up to man's estate, are no less intelligent than graceful.

Pollio. Many thanks, my dear Asinius, but we must delay the excursion ; for I had a few days of fever on the marshes of the Po, and am scarcely yet so strong as I was when I set out.

Calvus. Indeed ! Believe me I grieve to hear it. Can we procure you no remedies or restoratives ?

Pollio. My friend ! my friend ! talk not to me of remedies : I will take no more of them. In the beginning of my malady I was impatient both of restraint and of delay, and sent for a physician. When he had felt my pulse and had made me put out my tongue for examination, he ordered that I should eat nothing but a small morsel of bread ; and he carried to me, late in the evening, what he called a composing draught. It did indeed compose me wonderfully ; but it brought me such a series of dreams, in about twelve or thirteen hours, as I doubt whether I could relate in as many days.

Calvus. Pray indulge me with as many of them as you can recollect. Let me hope that I myself was among them, with my

friend Catullus, and his skiff, and his father's illustrious guest, of whom we have been speaking.

POLLIO. Not you, nor Catullus, nor the skiff; but certainly I did see in my dream the Dictator, the Pontifex Maximus. I fancied I saw him go out of the door of Jupiter's temple, and heard whispers from the ministers who swept it, and soon after from some in rags and tatters, and ultimately from others in richer vestments. They laid their heads together and, after some consultation, they agreed that they, one and all, had as good a right to the office of Pontifex as the Dictator. In the next moment the statue of Jupiter was beardless; in the next, some dirty and nauseating habiliments were thrown over his shoulders. And then came forward a barber who clipped his eyebrows close, and oiled and soaped one side of his head, leaving the other side intact. This barber, who succeeded so well in comedy, changed the sock for the buskin, and performed on Jupiter what Jupiter had performed on Saturn. There was a whisper, and then a vote, that the number of the Vestal Virgins should be increased and unlimited. After many sidelong glances the vote was gravely carried. Before long, I seemed to see a couple of Cupids bearing a house across the sea, and setting it down on the borders of the Adriatic. No sooner was this over, than a modest young girl, with a child in her arms, was brought into it. She seemed bewildered, and begged and entreated them to let her go quietly home again. Several priests then stripped her of her clean and modest attire, and, caring little for her repugnance, crowned her hair with costly jewels, painted her face and covered all parts below with a robe of gossamer and gold. At this, the infant cried aloud and woke me.

CALVUS. Curious dream indeed!

POLLIO. This is only what appeared before my eyes. What was spoken I do not remember so well; and it is lucky for you. It is only in a dream, and hardly there, that so many incongruities and contradictions ever came together. In the midst of these, by way of interlude, there were wrestlings and fightings and stabbings, and above there where the sceptre and eagle of Jupiter had stood, was a banner dropping with blood, surmounted by three letters—PAX.

CALVUS. This is indeed, O Pollio, such a dream as a man weary and feverish from a long journey might well fall into. But perhaps there may previously have been some little agitation of the nerves; for you are aware that every part of Italy is infested by thieves of one descrip-

tion or other, and that wherever there are rich way*farers* there also are sly and alert way*layers*. The road on which Julius Cæsar passed and repassed has now its own legions under darker colours: the vulture has taken place of the eagle. Enough of this matter for to-day. You, who travel usually with many attendants, have, doubtless, brought with you the usefullest of them all.

POLLIO. Cooks?

CALVUS. Perhaps I was wrong in my estimate. Really I did not mean cooks, but books.

POLLIO. Yes indeed I have brought both. Without the cooks there is no good digestion, and without good digestion no enjoyment of that which is falsely thought to be most remote from the dinner-table. From ill-concocted food rise ill-concocted ideas; and Imagination is much indebted to what she most despises.

CALVUS. Oratory is mute since the establishment of the last Triumvirate, now above twenty years ago, but poetry seems to be still as flourishing as when Lucretius and Catullus were living. Have you brought anything new along with you?

POLLIO. Not much; only some satires (and would you believe it?) written by Horatius.

CALVUS. I am confident that, whatever he does, he does well.

POLLIO. You shall have them in the morning at breakfast, and judge for yourself.

CALVUS. I am little fond of satire; but I will read whatever he writes. I know imperfectly the character of the Apulians; but certainly the Romans are far from a well-tempered people: there is somewhat of the wolf in them yet. Lucilius was a mere butcher.

POLLIO. Horatius is no butcher; he is an anatomist. Both draw blood: but under the one we writhe; under the slender beak of the other the blood is sucked out gradually, imperceptibly, blandly: we smile in our slumber, and are first aware of our wound and our debility when we wake.

CALVUS. If Horatius is truly of such a stamp, I shall prefer him, not indeed as a poet, yet as a satirist, to my old friend of the Sirmio. It was hardly worth his while to dirty his hands by besmearing his neighbour's house. Horatius may never have written so fine a satire as that of Catullus on Egnatius, but on the other hand, we may be certain that he runs no risk of committing an attack on Cæsar. Justly did Marcus Tullius say that the verses of Catullus left an

indelible mark on the conqueror of the Gauls, and justly did he praise that conqueror's equanimity. It was not patriotism which excited the spleen of my Valerius, for his lines were written long before the passing of the Rubicon. That he once admired Cæsar I well know; that he always despised and hated Pompeius I know equally. We agreed, and I believe that you are of the same opinion, that never was man less amiable, less capable of friendship, less accessible to the claims of justice and humanity. He threatened, as Cicero tells us, fire and sword to the whole of Italy, and was indignant that Sulla should have possessed the power of doing it, and he, Pompeius Magnus, should not. He never performed one signally grand or truly generous action.

POLLIO. Curious! that two madmen, the one raving-mad, the other melancholy-mad, should be the only two men denominated *The Great*.

CALVUS. By whom? by a madder world.

POLLIO. Neither of them had to contend with the strength and stature, the impetuous onslaught, the indomitable courage, the vigour that springs afresh from every fall, of that nation which most despises death, and most venerates Julius Cæsar.

CALVUS. Ah Pollio! Pollio! do past days never turn their faces back upon you? Do they never remind you that he became our lord and master?

POLLIO. Indeed they do: curses on those who imposed on us the sad necessity! We enjoy at least in the decline of life a season of tranquillity.

CALVUS. It may perhaps end with him who closed last the Temple of Janus: can any man tell?

POLLIO. Between to-day and to-morrow there is night: can any man see across? It is wise to make the most and the best of what is at hand. In some measure we may frame the future, in none foretell it.

CALVUS. I remember the time when your temper was less calm, and your endurance of a usurper less patient.

POLLIO. Usurpers are not always the worst of evils. They are obliged, for their own security, to bring forward in others the most energetic and most inventive minds. Corrupt and rotten states are the hotbeds of usurpation. Men of powerful intellect are propelled toward their similars: the grovelling mind is quiescent; and, if it

grumbles, it grumbles like a swine in search of the chestnuts other swine before him have eaten.

CALVUS. It is a blessing, O Asinius, to find you in such high spirits, and particularly after such exhaustion. They who fancied you jealous of the glory which Cicero and Cæsar had acquired in eloquence, have been much mistaken.

POLLIO. Not much, my Calvus! I was, and I continue to be, jealous of both. Cicero, far below Demosthenes in vigour and compression, and farther still below him in purity and consistency of patriotism, stands high above the highest of Greek or Roman in the wisdom of his ethics. His style is equalled only by Cæsar's.

CALVUS. Grammarians have fancied that Cæsar borrowed the style of Xenophon.

POLLIO. Never have I perused a more interesting volume than the *Anabasis*. Generally, but not there, his style is maidenly, mincing, prudish and (if one may be vernacular in your company) *pursed up*. While I am reading him I fancy I hear a lisp. Jealousy peers out through his mock-modesty. He never once mentions in his *History* the name of Epaminondas, the worthiest man and most scientific general of all the Greeks. This jealousy is worse than mock-modesty, and very different; it is sheer impudence. Epaminondas had won such a battle as never was won before, and never since until the battle of Pharsalia. In each of these fights the conqueror had to contend with forces not only more numerous, but of equal discipline and equal experience; and within sight of their own fields, their own houses, their own wives and children, in the Spartan.

CALVUS. Certainly here you have done justice to Cicero and Cæsar, with no injustice to Xenophon. No man ever can praise too highly such writers as Herodotus and Thucydides, but surely the Greek philosophers have been over-rated.

POLLIO. I am inclined to believe that many more have praised them than have read them. Praise is a species of traditionary wealth: long possession is its security: we gain nothing by finding flaws in the title-deeds.

CALVUS. Generously spoken! Let us be contented with filching and detracting a little from our contemporaries, especially if we are neighbours and friends. Seriously, I am glad to find you more

genial than I expected. You never had any asperity, but often some reserve: I now see none!

POLLIO. It is with men as with fruits: some grow hard and corrugated, some insipid, while others are the sweeter, and not the less sound, the longer they hang upon the tree. What are those girls about, just under the window?

CALVUS. Trimming bay and myrtle.

POLLIO. Yes, my Calvus! these grow, I see, upon other parts of the shore beside the peninsula so celebrated by your Catullus. Take them, take them! neither bay nor myrtle befits the brow of Pollio.

SECOND CONVERSATION

(*Fraser's Mag.*, 1855; *Wks.*, ii., 1876.)

POLLIO. Our excursion on the water has refreshed and invigorated me greatly.

CALVUS. And what opinion have you formed to yourself of our Gallic hosts?

POLLIO. Indeed a high one. Never were soldiers more frank and hearty, more considerate and urbane.

CALVUS. Unquestionably they had been informed of your arrival at my villa.

POLLIO. Who, I wonder, could have given them the information?

CALVUS. Truly I am ignorant of this.

POLLIO. Then why suggest the fact? Insidious rogue!

CALVUS. Did you not observe on the table a volume with your name superscribed?

POLLIO. I saw one with yours; and under it, in large letters, Caius Valerius Catullus.

CALVUS. This was very graceful and delicate in the new occupant of his house. Catullus, after the death of his brother in the Troad, left no near relative; and when ultimately he went to reside at Rome, his villa soon fell into decay.

POLLIO. It seems now again to be in good repair; and the library is well stored.

CALVUS. Even more so than ever. The number of books has been largely increased by the proprietor.

ASINIUS POLLIO AND LICINIUS CALVUS

POLLIO. Holy Jupiter! and perhaps this very man's grandfather was a Teuton or Cimber, shaggy as a goat and fierce as a tiger, who fought against Caius Marius.

CALVUS. I believe he is a Teuton by descent: the Cimbers are less reclaimable; they continue to be ferocious and treacherous.

POLLIO. He cautiously abstained from mentioning Marius, when he boasted of the prowess his countrymen had displayed against their adversaries. He only bowed to the compliment I paid him on the gallant resistance they made in the most formidable battle that ever nation fought against nation. It was no affair of the manly with the effeminate; it was no game of play for a diadem of purple; it was for the mastery and dominion of the world. Had we lost, the city of Rome (had any such city been left standing) might have forfeited even its old name, and another have been given to it, which you and I, if we existed to hear it, might have found difficult to pronounce.

CALVUS. Our hospitable friend was grateful toward Cæsar, and loud and even obstreperous in praising him. The Gauls have sufficient reason to extol the one and to abominate the other. In my opinion, differ as you may from it, he was on the whole an evil to us, although, had he lived, he would have adorned our city and amended our constitution.

POLLIO. But without Marius we should have had no city to be adorned. You and I should have been hewing wood and drawing water, or perhaps have been suspended here in wicker baskets, to be a burnt offering to their Gods.

CALVUS. We might indeed; we might even have been educated to bow the head and bend the knee, and howl our prayers and praises, before those hideous demons.

POLLIO. Anything rather than the wicker basket. In the house we visited I remarked the statues of Mercury and Apollo and Bacchus. Here is, methinks, an improvement.

CALVUS. Some of the elderly men look grimly inauspicious on these images, which they fancy to be smiling at them. But in their absence the younger dance round about them, which they do well; and sing, which they do execrably. Some of them write verses not unworthy of the house we have left behind us.

POLLIO. There is more there of the amatory than of the hymn. I remember, though, a hymn or two in Catullus. Diana must have found it difficult to keep her countenance at hearing him, devoted so

little to chastity, celebrate her praises; and Hymen must have tucked up his saffron robe, when he came forward, in a somewhat loose attire, at the marriage of Manlius and Julia. It is pleasant to find that the gloomy old Gods are left behind in their gloomy old woods. They did Cæsar no harm, and Cæsar did them none. Our ancestors brought out of every conquered city every God they found within, and treated them respectfully and reverentially. Julius was no such God-collector: there was barely room in his tent even for a tesselated pavement.

Calvus. He was very moderate in the objects of his worship, and the few did as much for him as he could have hoped from the many. Taranis, and the rest of the foresters, will never come to their full sturdy growth in the relaxing climate of our Italian regions. Religions, like the sun, take their course from east to west: traversing the globe, they are not all equally temperate, equally salubrious: they dry up some lands, and inundate others. Ours is not likely to be much altered or much enlarged. We have given Latin names to Grecian Gods.

Pollio. In my opinion that religion is the best in which there is the least of fraud and violence, the most of forbearance and sincerity.

Calvus. Wise and goodnatured Gods will never quarrel about the names they are called by. Do parents whip their children for imperfect pronunciation?

Pollio. I would not be surety for morose and ferocious men, intoxicated by the wine-cup of their priests, keeping the peace toward you, if you declined their mysteries and orgies. They call you blind, and knock out your eyes for being so. The Gauls are tolerant, gay, and genial. I do not imagine that they sang so cheerfully and blythely in their woods as at the dinner-table we left, somewhat late.

Calvus. There are few nations, none perhaps, without their songs, but Italy seems to excell in the vocal.

Pollio. In Egypt there are no songsters, even among the birds; and no dancers but among the snakes, which are very agile and graceful in their movements, and seem to be endowed with a fine ear both for time and tune. I never have heard them, in the exercise of their profession, hiss at one another, as your poets do: and yet the hiss is the natural voice of both.

Calvus. We have certainly this facility both by nature and practice. Luckily my Catullus hath spared me, though we were intimate : indeed I do not remember a poet of note (and I have lived familiarly with several) who has thought me worth the cast of a pebble or burr. A few whose causes and characters I defended, have, I am told, spoken ill or slightingly of me. Certain proof that I wanted, if not abilities, at least judgment and discretion.

Pollio. Handfuls of dirt, thrown by hands that can hold but little, fall and are scattered ere they reach what they are aimed at ; parent Earth receives them into her bosom, and smiles with serenity at their idle sport. Calvus, when you have performed a good office, think yourself well repaid for it by impunity. We may learn somewhat from the foolish, more from the wicked. We are not obliged to sit on the same bench with either, nor to con the same lesson : but they are always worth watching, and sometimes of studying as curiosities.

Calvus. Assuredly not the rarest.

Pollio. I think it improbable that the versifiers of the colony should decry, rather than celebrate, your manifest superiority.

Calvus. Never have I had any proof or signification of it. Our own countrymen have the character, in general, of more mutual evil-speaking than any other : our neighbours are exempt from a malady by which the sight is distorted and the heart corroded. Whether by proximity or disposition, I partake the character of those about me, and feel no slight pleasure in applauding their attempts at poetry. Many of the rising generation have written such verses as are worthy of being recited on the terrace of Catullus, under which his little skiff, which he dedicated to Castor and Pollux, is still lying with its oars in it. The possessor has caulked it afresh, and preserves the old sails religiously. The youths are much given to scenic representations ; some of them have even attempted tragedy : but there they fail : in comedy they are admirable. No peculiarity of character escapes their observation, and they hit it with a precision and a delicacy truly attic. Terentius is more in favour with them than Plautus is ; and you would sometimes fancy that they are acquainted with Aristophanes.

Pollio. They may partly owe the purity of their taste to Cæsar, who, as you well remember, praises it in Terentius, while he regrets in him the deficiency of comic humour.

CALVUS. Yes, I remember his opinion, conveyed in verse, and principally for its too strong expression: "unum hoc *maceror*": *doleo* is weak after this, and *doleo* is itself almost an exaggeration.

POLLIO.[1] We all are hypocrites, my friend, in court and out of court. Among the epistles you receive, whatever the occasion, try to recollect how very few there are without "*I am deeply grieved*" or "*I am heartily glad*": yet the writer's grief, probably, was no deeper than the extremity of a well-pared nail, and the gladness did not penetrate the thin fluid round the skin of the heart. There is an ampulla in the plainest speech. In one way or other (if not to you, to themselves) most men delight in lying; all in being lied to, provided the lie be soft and gentle, and imperceptible in its approaches.

I do, however, think that Cæsar would have been better pleased had there been somewhat more of hilarity in Terentius.

CALVUS. Surely, if hilarity was gratifying, he heard enough of it in his triumph on the conquest of the Gauls. Perhaps he wrote the verse in question before that other was sung by his soldiers with such sprightliness,

Gallias Cæsar subegit, etc.

Now again to metres: this verse suggests the thought. Is it not remarkable that the trochaic, so lugubrious in cadence, where the syllable that follows the first falls weaker under it, should be chosen to express jocularity and exultation?

POLLIO. It always hath been so, both in Italy and Greece. Indeed I think there is a sound of animation in it, well adapted to the march of soldiers, although the tragic poets in their choruses have applied it differently. The anapæst, preceded by the iambic, was the favourite of Aristophanes. He appears to me to be the greatest master of harmony in all the dramatists.

CALVUS. We Romans do not always act in obedience to our Greek preceptors. Boys are taught, in the level lawn of poetry where they now are exercised, that a dactylic word should never occupy the second seat in the hexameter. The sentence here, however, is quite as metrical as it need be. The two great masters of harmony, in which they are coequals, Homer and Theocritus, frequently place a dactylic word in the second place; and Cæsar, I think, did it

[1] From "POLLIO" to "preceptors" added in 2nd ed.

designedly; for *maceror hoc unum* comes as readily in the collocation.

POLLIO. Very true. Cæsar appears to have preferred Terentius to Plautus; Cicero the contrary. Comedy owes but a moderate debt to either; yet they are the two most authoritative masters of Latinity. Plautus is richer in words than any other Latin writer: but coined fewer than Aristophanes. Those of Plautus are still current throughout the empire; those of Aristophanes were laid aside with the machinery of the day. Cicero was intimately versed in Plautus, and acquired from him a fondness for diminutives. It may appear incredible, but such is the fact, that the orator and philosopher has more of them in his writings than Plautus and Terentius and Catullus put together.

CALVUS. Diminutives are more adapted to light poetry and amatory epistles. The Gauls are become the most festive people in the world, having been throughout many ages, and until recently, the most ferocious and sanguinary. If evil times should return to us, I know not where we shall be safer than among them.

POLLIO. Beyond the boundaries of Italy I would never willingly reside.

CALVUS. Neither beyond nor within those boundaries is any place more beautiful than our Sirmio; no, not even Sorrentum.

POLLIO. Enthusiastic patriot! Take and be contented with what I freely concede to you. Yes indeed, Sirmio is a beautiful peninsula; but there is another yet more beautiful: it is that which diverts the waters of the Larius into the Addua. Cæcilius is residing there; and it is there he composed the poem which you and Valerius so much admire.

CALVUS. I do not wonder that such a pleasant companion and such exalted a genius should detain you in the vicinity of Comum; but, in warmth and constancy of friendship for Pollio, Calvus will never yield even to Cæcilius.

POLLIO. Only give up the lake.

CALVUS. Look yonder. Do you not see Castor and Pollux over the little skiff? They shall fight for me, and I will never yield.

POLLIO. Remember, they are now with the Gauls, who give the beautiful lake fresh animation with their lively songs and dances. Do they ever converse with you on literature?

CALVUS. Frequently.

POLLIO. They are so quick in perception that I am sure their observations are usually just.

CALVUS. The young critics are singing from morning till night the verses of Catullus; and they like him the better on discovering in the most elegant of poets a few words which they claim as belonging to them.

POLLIO. What words are those?

CALVUS. *Ploxemum*, for instance, and *basium*. *Ploxemum* is the hurdle-framed cart of this country: *basium* is certainly a more expressive word than *osculum*, and is used instead of it wherever the colonies of Gaul have extended. *Osculum* is confined to a narrow region of Italy, and indeed is peculiarly Latin. *Savium* is Plautine: our delicate poets of late repudiate it: but in the Latian field it may be heard occasionally.

POLLIO. In that field there are still some remnants of the Saturnian age. Do you remember a certain exclamation of a rustic in the forum? Or have you forgotten the honest fellow in the ring who applauding your eloquent speech against Vatinius, exclaimed, and threw both arms above his head, "*Dii magni! salapusium disertum!*"[1]

CALVUS. I remember it well; and no part of the applause, from my hearers of every rank and condition, was received by me with greater glee. I doubt whether my critic in the crowd, or you, or Varro, or Cæsar himself, could have told me, on first hearing it, the origin of the word, plain as was its signification. It seems to be a compound of *sal* and *pusus*. The heir of *Pusus* is *Pusillus:* the termination *ium* is indicative of fondling; as for example in *Glycerium*, etc. It is worth something to be of small stature, when it raises up a man's elbows above his shoulders, and makes him appeal to the Gods to confirm the justice of his admiration.

POLLIO. If I could have spoken as well, and if so tall a man as I am could have excited any such wonder in him, he might perhaps have cried out "Look at that heron! who could believe that such a long neck and heavy wings should ever raise him above the marsh?" The expression of your encomiast might have puzzled the great writer on *Analogy*.

CALVUS. What an admirable work!

POLLIO. And consequently how many impertinent things have

[1] Cat., liii. 5.

the ignorant and inconsiderate written against it. The aim and intention of the author was to bring our language under rule and order; they were in all things his function and his delight. He succeeded in the army, in the city, in the provinces: and he would also have introduced the same propriety in the language. Partly by the indifference of authors, partly by the ignorance of transcribers and the negligence of dealers who employ them, our spelling has lost its fixity. Marcus Tullius ridiculed the writer who wrote *cives* for *civeis*: yet latterly the courtiers have favoured and their master has countenanced the novelty. It is not easily that you find a copy of Plautus or Terentius in which the spelling is theirs throughout. Even Crispus Sallustius, now living, has been unable to preserve his orthography in all the copies. He has indeed thus been accused of archaisms: and wherefore? because, feeling the certainty that some elder writers have spelt better than the generality of the later, he has bowed to their authority in preference.

CALVUS. His manners ill corresponded with the austerity and sanctitude of his style. In his Preface to the *Catilinarian Conspiracy*, he describes one source of luxury, in which the Romans are immersed, by a very coarse expression, such as would have better befitted the censor Cato in his shortest tunic. Notwithstanding, I greatly admire his historical works, and especially the speeches he introduces. Here I am not led toward, but actually pass into, the wider and more varied grounds of another noble historian, Titus Livius of Patavium. It has been reported in this part of the country that you have censured him for what you designate by the name *Patavinity*: and pray tell me how it is, for I can discern in him nothing that is not rigorously Roman.

POLLIO. I am no censurer of him, but on the contrary an admirer. No writer, Greek or Latin, is more grave and stately, I had almost said august.

CALVUS. There is much of eloquence and much of poetry in him. Inconsiderate men will perhaps tell us that historians ought to keep clear of poetry. If they mean *fiction*, they are partly, and but partly, in the right; for fiction is inseparable from the remoter and higher regions of history. History is essentially dramatic, and the most interesting portions of it are in dialogue. Give us action and we will reflect upon it. When we are agitated by the movement of events, we are impatient of being jogged and of being told in weighty

words what we ought to think about them. We are among the dead and the living; in one quarter is the legionary trumpet, in another the funereal horn. Suffer us in this field to be excited, in the next we will repose.

POLLIO. Not only the dramatic, not only the imaginative, but even the fabulous, may enter history, provided it be announced for what it is. The fabulous is often not only the most pleasant, but also the most instructive in her pages. Caution and dexterity are required to introduce it.

CALVUS. The historian, to be worthy of the name, must occasionally exercise the poet's office. It is impossible that any man could have heard what passed between Tarquinus and Lucretia in her bedchamber: yet Titus Livius brings out the very words which we must believe he spoke. No verse in Latin or Greek could have uttered them with equal significance. Note the order of words. *Sextus Tarquinius sum; ferrum in manu est; moriere si emiseris vocem.* I have remarked to many this admirable collocation. He would win her to compliance by his name, which bore along with it his royal rank, his martial courage, his lofty stature, and that prowess of limb which in woman's eyes is manly beauty. The verb follows the noun, not a syllable precedes it. He then intimidates her: the sword is there; the verb again stands behind. She must see at once the whole extent of her danger: death is announced: unconditional? inevitable? no: but, *si emiseris vocem.* We know in what manner our friend Cicero would have fabricated the sentence: we are quite certain his ear (pardon the expression) would have overlapped his understanding, and the sentence would have been this. *Ego sum Sextus Tarquinius; in manu autem ferrum est; si vocem emiseris moriere.* In the middle of this oration the girl would have jumped out of bed, and have run down-stairs before it ended.

POLLIO. You have hit upon it, Calvus. Such would have been Cicero's arrangement. Both of us in the forum have been obliged to study the position of our words, knowing that the Passions have sensitive ears: and the Senate too must be won over by the delicacy of the repast we set before it. Even the lowest of the populace is contented no longer with street music.

CALVUS. In my enthusiasm for Livius, it is probable I have made over and over again the same observations to you and others: but

if they have dropped out of your memory, if they are just, and above all if they are brief, the repetition is not unpardonable.

POLLIO. They who are afraid they are repeating what they have said before, may sometimes think they have spoken or written what they never have ; and thus an animated Being (such is a thought) is lost to the Creation.

CALVUS. I am confident you will forgive me thus praising my contemporaries. I know there is a penalty for the offence, and I know there are some of the praised who themselves would inform against me, crying, *I, lictor, colliga manus.*

POLLIO. Never mind them. I have known men, and have known them too well, who would abstain from doing you a wrong were it not for the sake of defending it, and thus experiencing the pleasure of laying out their talents. An apostate friend is triumphant when he can make you complain of him : never give him this advantage over you. Praise as loudly as you will the citizen of Patavium who hath restored the Commonwealth of Rome ; who hath raised up again before us the rushy cottage of Romulus, and surrounded it with walls expansive as the heavens ! Up they rose, bolder and bolder in the face of danger : Hannibal, who scaled the Alps, despaired at the sight of them.

CALVUS. Titus Livius hath manned those walls : Titus Livius hath ornamented the temples within them, placing God after God in mansions worthy of them, and filling them with adorers almost as venerable as the adored.

POLLIO. I have animadverted on the peculiarities of his style without acrimony or invidiousness : others more accustomed to decoration, and more fond of it, call them defects. A future age recurring to antiquity, may admire him more highly than the present, and more justly. Copiousness is now, and has been long, the fashion : and fashions not only run into extremes but into contrarieties. Marcus Brutus called the style of Cicero Asiatic. We may be Ionian and avoid the rigidity of the Egyptian. It is better to attract than to drag and bind. Our next generation may run counter to the present. Strong youth often affects austere manliness : but the beard of Camillus looks ill upon young faces. Livius, in the unruliness of adolescence, broke loose from Roman authority, and resolved to assume a style as different as possible from Cicero's, and preferred the Patavine.

CALVUS. Gently! gently! Pollio! Could Cicero, if his whole lifetime had been devoted to it, have composed such a history as that of Livius? His language, so admirable in everything else, was unfit for it: his back would have been bent, bowed down, and broken, under the weight of armour and viaticals which Titus carried with him easily and far.

You have not yet quite satisfied me in the use of your expression, I mean *Patavinity*.

POLLIO. My censure was slight. My meaning is that he employs the diction of his countrymen in small matters.

CALVUS. I never have remarked it. Can you recollect such?

POLLIO. They are hardly worth noticing. He uses *ab* for *a*, and *ex* for *e*.

CALVUS. If you and I avoided this usage, Terentius and Cæsar have countenanced it. Livius, no friend to his party and principles, comes nearer to him in style than any other has come, unless it be M. Brutus. Nothing can be more perfect in composition than the *Commentaries*.

POLLIO. I am quite of your opinion: and it has often struck me as a curious coincidence, that Brutus, to the extent of his abilities, imitated him. Cicero has made more of Brutus, as a writer and a philosopher, than he found in him.

CALVUS. No common case. Gold coin is oftener clipt than brass, and more easily abraded. These are not the days when a Brutus is overvalued. It was the more generous in Cicero to praise him, since he was invidious, both of his authority and celebrity. Asiatic never was Cicero, although he sometimes wore at the bottom of his rhetorician robe a flounce too many.

POLLIO. Everything in its season. Neither our language nor the tone of our voice is the same in public as in private, with a stranger as with a friend. You indulge, and well you may, in the fanciful and facetious with me; you never would have done so with Pompeius, nor with the people in the forum to any extent: you might with Cicero and Cæsar; they were genial and congenial; and both of them would have listened to your remarks with almost as much pleasure as I have been doing.

CALVUS. Well! we will leave them, and Brutus too, where they are, and again to Livius.

POLLIO. He, like Brutus, is indifferent to the close of his sentences.

Now surely, by blunting the point the edge of the sword is none the more efficient?

CALVUS. I would rather be deaf than hear, or expect to hear, a verb at the termination of almost every period.

POLLIO. Cicero may have been too fond of it in the earlier of his *Orations*, but where is there a greater variety than in the structure of his sentences? His ear was as internally polished as you poets may imagine the conch of Nereus. He sometimes is exuberant. Conciseness may be better: but where there is much wealth we may excuse a little waste, especially when it falls not unworthily. I confess to you I love a nobility and amplitude of style, provided it never sweeps beyond the subject. There are people who cut short the tails of their dogs; and such dogs are proper for such masters: but the generous breeds, coursers of the lordly stag, and such as accompanied the steps of Hippolytus and Adonis, were unmutilated. I admire in Cicero much beside his forensic eloquence.

CALVUS. It grew weaker in the presence of a greater man. No such faint whimpering voice Demosthenes raised to heaven when his country fell exhausted and prostrate, and when, throwing his strong arms around her, he failed to raise her up again. Cicero fell as low as his country, and each simultaneously, at the feet of Cæsar. Ambitious men (and never was man more ambitious than Marcus Tullius) are like children who are beginning to swim: their only thought is how to keep the head above-water; and by this anxiety and effort they sink.

POLLIO. Cicero swam upon cork and bladder when he was strong and expert enough to strike on without, and to breast the current. He wanted the vigour of character, and perhaps too the vigour of language, we find united in Demosthenes, whose furnace poured forth incessantly its torrent of purified iron; no part of his fabric was constructed for the fusion and elaboration of softer ornamental metals. Cicero's whole house was decorated with rich filigree, with vases that vibrated and rang at a stroke of the knuckle, and with innumerable graceful little images.

CALVUS. But how beautiful, plain, and simple are not only his *Dialogues*, but also his two brief Treatises on *Friendship* and *Old-age*. He was perfectly aware that authors ought not to dress themselves in purple and fine linen every day.

POLLIO. Assuredly he was. We would allow them a daily change

of the fine linen, but would advise them to reserve the purple for solemn and rare occasions. Now Cicero did this. What is become of his poetry I know not. At this moment it occurs to me that no orator but yourself ever wrote passably in poetry, Greek or Latin.

CALVUS. True enough—excepting the exception. Do not quarrel with Titus for invading my boundary; but rather let us turn back again toward Tusculum, where the questions are less litigious. With greatly more propriety may it be said of Cicero than of Socrates, that he made Philosophy a good domestic house-wife. She had wandered in the fields over the world, like another Ceres, distracted by her search: she also had plenty of poppies and other flaunting flowers about her bewildered head, but there was scarcely an ear of corn on her brow or on her bosom, scarcely a grain that would bear the winnowing. Cicero took Philosophy by the hand. She found herself at last in a cool and quiet room; and she came out from it in a modest robe, reaching down to her feet, but not sweeping and scattering the dust about her.

POLLIO. In Cicero and his society we find no sophisms or quibbles, but fair discussion and diligent investigation of important truths. The familiar and facetious are not forbidden to enter, or to bear a due part in the conversation. There is no indecorous mirth, no loud banter; but everything chaste, comely, quiet, with gracefully subdued festivity.

CALVUS. Poor Cicero! How often, my Pollio, have we attempted in our earlier days to imitate his tone and gesture; until our voices changed, deeper but less melodious, and our thews grew sharper, hardier, more prominent, determined to have their own way.

Whoever would enter public life, or more wisely prefer the private, let him, regardless of the rustics he will meet, take his morning walk on the road to Tusculum.

XI. TACITUS AND AGRICOLA

(Now first reprinted from the *National Magazine*, 1857.)

TACITUS. Your daughter, my own beloved Julia, would have accompanied me hither, O Agricola, had I not reminded her that the bravest hearts are the least capable of uttering the sorrowful word "Farewell."

AGRICOLA. Universal word! uttered in the same tone, although in other syllables, by every nation. Word of the lover, of the widow, of the widower, and sometimes of the commander in the very hour of victory. May it never be sighed by our Julia on either of the two she loves best!

TACITUS. I unite with you in this wish, my friend and father; but rather so than by the survivor over her urn.

AGRICOLA. Away with idle thoughts, with forebodings, with reminiscences! I am standing on the verge of a wide and waste field, and must prepare to subdue and cultivate it. Most generals have attendants and followers: I have none beside a few domestics. In passing through Gaul, I shall collect the troops requisite for the expedition. The ships will have arrived before me, with sufficient stores for victualling them during many months, until fresh supplies from the coast of Belgium shall have landed. Wherever there is a scanty supply, there is a weak, because a discontented, army. Therefor even the least provident commanders have insisted that the naval forces be entirely under their control, and the commissaries be approved and appointed by them. The necessity of plunder is thus avoided, which alienates from us those we must conciliate before we govern.

TACITUS. Conciliation saves in great measure the expenditure of force. Every plunderer raises a hundred enemies; and what he seizes may in half-an-hour do a damage which half-a-century is inadequate to repair. Barbarians soon forget an act of kindness: an injury sinks deep into the breast through woad and wolf-skin.

AGRICOLA. The act of kindness then must be repeated, and the injury avoided.

TACITUS. This is true philosophy, which, to be consistent, must be founded on humanity.

AGRICOLA. Since it is urgent I should leave the city by sunrise, I am rejoiced that much of the evening is left to me, and that I may continue to hear the expression of those sentiments which first engaged me and my daughter to cherish you so affectionately. Continue the remarks you were making on the Britons.

TACITUS. Forgive me, if in continuation I should appear less indulgent. The Celtic and Cimbric races, cognate in origin, and similar in character, are never to be trusted in peace, until you exhibit and demonstrate to them practically its manifest advantages. O Agricola, can any nation, should any nation, tolerate an invader? It may be for their ultimate good, certainly it is not for their immediate. The Britons seem to be more restless in a state of inactivity than in a state of war. Impatient of agriculture, ignorant and disdainful of commerce, at present they appear to be irreclaimable from perfidy and ferocity.

AGRICOLA. Have not all nations been once in the same condition? the polished Persian, the scientific Egyptian; the forefathers of Pericles, of Sophocles, of Homer; the founders of Athens, of Corinth, of Miletus? Happy am I who am destined to conquer where I can destroy no cities, depopulate no habitations of industry, sink no transports of commerce; but, on the contrary, to show that, if Mars was our progenitor, the wolf has left in us no infection.

TACITUS. Immediately after the death of the Gracchi and the Scipios our people began to degenerate, and to become at once more effeminate and more sanguinary. The great Julius himself, no model of morality, was the only true reformer; for the Catos had in their character nothing of gentleness, of generosity, or even of humanity; and Brutus was little better than a copy-book for schoolboys, to throw aside when they had done with ciphering. We have seen better men in times no better.

AGRICOLA. We have also seen men able to make the times better, and who did. Vespasian and Titus have raised the Roman name higher than ever it stood before, in the contemplation of the dispassionate and judicious.

TACITUS. Its fall is imminent; and I tremble at calculating the

rapidity. They who live in the most disgraceful and disastrous times, are less aware of the vices and enormities around them, than they who were alive just before, and who continue to live through them. The effect of pestilential marshes is less perceived in traversing the road than it is in stopping and reposing. Under the worst of the Neros the citizens were contented, because the constitution of their minds grew adapted by degrees to their condition. After the death of Marius, the Romans lost utterly and irrevocably the Roman character. One high intelligence, claimant of descent from the daughter of Jupiter, could not, perhaps would not, restore it, even when the legions, the people, the senate, and the priesthood, had united in placing him among the stars.

AGRICOLA. We belong not to the College of Augurs ; let us on this subject hold our peace. Difficulties will arise before me on my landing, which I have prepared to obviate. Much iron may be bought with little gold. Generals must not always be philosophers. War is not to be put an end to at the present hour ; it has been my business to direct its course. Coalition of the princes against me would be troublesome, would be dangerous ; and I thought it more expedient that their arms should be turned against one another. I believe I shall find them in this position ; but am ready for the contrary.

TACITUS. Indulge them in their love of war, even after you have deemed it politic to conciliate them ; you may then, by special favor, bring them, one party or both, under your eagles. Different from the Germans, they are no less mercenary than insolent. The first of their Roman invaders was not tempted to destroy their capital, which capital was necessary for his intercourse with the Belgian traders. These alone could supply his army with grain and oxen, and moreover with horses, of which the native breeds are small and scanty. Those which were harnessed to their chariots were Belgian.

AGRICOLA. How seductive is novelty, even to the warrior ! The bow and arrow were formidable weapons in the hands of such strong men as the Britons, who, if any thing could have taught them the least of military science, would have attempted to draw their enemy into the woods and marshes. There is little of solid ground for the evolution of cars with scythes attached to them ; and neither their Druids nor their wizards have any such incantations as would bring

down our legions to the places they might designate. Our business is to attract them around our fortresses, where, instead of starving us, they would themselves be starved; for all barbarians are improvident and wasteful. Our strongholds would at all times be replete with the necessaries of subsistence. Any defect of precaution on the part of my commissaries will be punished by death, under the scourge of those they would have famished. Aware of the evil, and negligent in removing it, great would be my guilt; to be unaware of it, in my station, would be no less. Instead of triumph, or ovation, or any other species of military honor or civil dignity, the lictor should unbind the fasces and bring out the central axe for me.

TACITUS. Exemplarily just! gloriously impartial! no milder punishment should be inflicted on such defaulters in the commissariat. The intercourse of these agents with the traders is lucrative on each side, and promotes good-will in a large body of the population. It is easy to subjugate by the yoke of trade, a yoke well padded, and rendering the animal not only patient under it, but ready to travel any length of road leading to plenteous provender and warm stabling.

AGRICOLA. Cornelius, if you run on in this flowery way, you will write no compacter or conciser a history than Cicero would have done, had he carried his design into execution.*

TACITUS. Contented should I be to have caught the extreme fringe of his flowing robe. A writer of equal wisdom and of higher genius executed the task thirty years later, to which our greatest orator and soundest philosopher was less fitted. Enough is remaining for me; too much indeed, if any other family so insane as the Neros should in any time be elected by the Pretorian bands to govern the Roman people.

AGRICOLA. You are likelier to lose your tranquillity than your judgment. Yield we to necessity, knowing that if we resist, we fall; and that if we fall, we bring down many with us. The soil under us is too friable to support us. Willingly am I removed from Rome, foreseeing many vicissitudes and few improvements. Arbitrary power pleases me, because it leaves to me liberty, which it never

* Tacitus, usually terse, is sometimes florid. He writes, "Alpium cacumina *fida nivibus*," and "Ne armentis quidem *suus honos aut gloria frontis*," on the cattle of Germany. Neither Cicero nor Livius wrote thus; nor indeed have I ventured to represent Tacitus speaking so youthfully. Few historians excel him in sobriety of style, none in sagacity and impartiality.—W. S. L.

does to the wicked or the weak. I shall be able to do good; and woe betide the man who stands between it and me! *Imperator sum.* How few who have said it have spoken truly! The most despicable of men have usually been the most elevated in station.

TACITUS. To humanise a barbarous people is less difficult than to raise a degraded; but neither the virtues nor the lifetime of any one man are sufficient to effect it. When you have only laid the foundation you have attained the summit of human glory.

AGRICOLA. If the Gods help me in my labor, I will do it.

TACITUS. It occurs to me at this moment, from these your words, that you will encounter opposing Gods in the forest you are about to traverse.

AGRICOLA. A conqueror who is resolved to maintain his conquest, must introduce first the laws of his country, then the language, and, by slower and imperceptible degrees, the religion. We Romans took every God we could seize upon in the captured cities; they did us great good. Our people prayed to them, some believing in their divinity, some unbelieving; but the conquered were highly gratified at our worship, and felt themselves in turn essentially the conquerors.

TACITUS. But this rabble of deities was excluded from the camp.

AGRICOLA. Wisely; it would have been only in our way. Yet every troop of our confederates is permitted to enjoy whatever worship gives him hope and confidence. We shall experience some difficulty in subduing or assuaging the ferocious rites of the Druids. It can only, or chiefly, be done by the intercourse of our soldiers with their women. These will be captivated by the serenity of our Jupiter and the smiles of our Venus; in the one they will prefer a beard sleek and glossy from the fumes of frankincense to one begrimed and hardened by the blood of men; in the other, a beauty placed above the evil eye of jealousy, and smiling as they unfold to her the secrets of their hearts. Pertinacity in a religion is usually in proportion to its absurdity; much also is dependent on climate. Hence the Gods of Greece and Italy are genial: the harsher stock on which they were engrafted is grown obsolete. Jupiter has long been father of them all; his father Saturn is without one worshipper.

TACITUS. Religions slip easily one into another where the priest does not lay his wand across the road.

AGRICOLA. It appears to me that no commodity is more marketable than the sacerdotal. The priest relaxes his hold on the man to

seize the purse. I will make this bargain with him. On his refusal, which is hardly to be apprehended, I drive him into the mountains. Thousands of the natives have imitated our habiliments, and have covered their suns and stars with woven clothing. The priests will reprove in them such proximity to themselves, and repress such a step in advance.

TACITUS. Justly have you remarked the necessity of introducing our Latin tongue, without which we shall be unable to inculcate our laws and recommend our institutions. No nation can long hold command over another unless this primordial impediment be removed.

AGRICOLA. The Britons are reported to be proud and arrogant. The father is reluctant to allow his son the rudiments of Roman education. Some even of the most intelligent are persuaded that their language is more flexible and more sonorous than ours.

TACITUS. To them it naturally must appear so, and perhaps justly. It may even be more ancient; which they are not likely to know or to think about; if they did, their pride would increase. I have heard a few sentences spoken by captives; and certainly there was as much of the sonorous, and no less of the guttural, than in the Etruscan or the Greek. Our language is become less vigorous than it was in the *Heroics* of Ennius, and less copious than in the *Comedies* of Plautus. It was then at its spring-tide; it hath been ebbing ever since: Cicero and Cæsar, our great masters, equal in authority, filtered and refined it.

AGRICOLA. Latinity is a composite, and, like the composite in architecture, is slenderer than in the former orders.

TACITUS. I was proceeding to modify my remark. Let me entreat you to acquit me of invidiousness; let me protest to you that, in my opinion, no Latin writer ever attained the grandor and majesty of Titus Livius The Muse of History hath placed him high and separate on her curule chair.

AGRICOLA. Gravely and judiciously uttered! Our language, I trust, will continue to be spoken, in many regions of the earth, during far more centuries than it hath yet existed. We collected our first words from the shepherds of Latium and from the agricultural Sabines. Perhaps the language of the Briton was spoken by his progenitors as early as the language of Homer by the inhabitants of Hellas. Perhaps the Briton too, at no distant period, may

boast of his poet. Since the banishment of Ovid, we Romans have never produced so much of true poetry as would fill a single page; all of it put together is not worth a scazon or a phaleucic of Catullus, an ode of Horace, or a brief elegy of the tender Albius. Can you repeat, or do you regret to have forgotten, any ten verses?

TACITUS. The best are a few epigrams of a Spaniard; two or three of which are facetious and graceful; several more are by no means despicable. Epigram and declamation in vain assume the garb of poetry.

AGRICOLA. Had I leisure, and could indulge in delay, I would willingly hear you discourse more at large on the lighter occupations of your youth. I do not think I shall ever afford you materials for an epic, or even an ode.

TACITUS. Let me trust in Providence that you never will for an elegy. Unwillingly would I write further than to the hundredth page of your Commentaries, which I would much rather transcribe at your dictation than compose.

AGRICOLA. If life is granted me, you, or some other less able, may relate the circumnavigation of Britain. Nor shall a smaller iland to the westward be unexplored by me. Carthaginians, with Mauritanians and Iberians, have visited both countries; but it was not their policy to improve the manners and institutions of the people. The Tyrians had taught them the ceremony of human sacrifices, and left behind no other memorial than the rude and massive altars which they compelled the inhabitants to erect for this purpose. The Druids came out of Gaul long after them, not long before Cæsar's invasion. Their religion had extended over but a small portion of Gaul. Some of them had acquired the Greek alphabet, but without a particle of literature, from the traders of Massilia, and, like other priests, had employed their acquirements in the subjugation of their more ignorant fellow-creatures. We must help them to extirpate the mistletoe, by supplying them with golden sickles. The thirst of blood is nowhere so insatiable as the thirst of gold, which is moreover the cheapest instrument of conquest. I have enough of it for my purpose at the present time. An example of integrity and frugality will draw toward me the better and the wiser. Of all mercenaries, the priest is the most active. The British will probably be at first intractable. Pactolus flows easier over smooth and soft sands; but there are crevices in the hardest

rocks for the grains it carries with it to insinuate themselves in. Let us look far beyond them.

TACITUS. Who knows but that you and your mariners may discover the vast unvisited iland of the Hesperides, where, if we listen to poets, the heroes of old, after long and glorious strife, oblivious of contention, and beyond the cries of Discord, rest finally from their labors, and partake in the communion of god-like peace? Let us believe as much as we can of what is pleasurable and profitable, and encourage the same in others. Wisely hath discretionary power been confided to your hands over the naval no less than over the military armaments.

AGRICOLA. Vespasian and Titus knew perfectly that no operations are sure of success on other terms. It is a solecism to call that leader a *commander-in-chief* whose power is not extended to the deck of a trireme. Dictatorial power, if not nominally, yet essentially, is necessary at the head of an army. I possess it; and will exert it to the benefit of many, to the detriment of none. The vanquished, their children, and their later descendants, are they who will honor me the most. Such is my ambition.

TACITUS. The best of men (you, O Agricola, are an example of it) have appeared in the worst of times; few indeed of them; else the times had not been the worst. Beginning with Julius, we have seen a greater number of intelligent, vigilant, humane, generous, and beneficent heads of the Republic, than in the same period while consuls held the supreme power. Anxiously do men look forward at this moment to one who will repair the damages and disorders of the state; one who will not repose his power on the shoulders of drunken soldiers, acting from the excitement of festivities.

AGRICOLA. Mine will run into no danger through a similar cause.

TACITUS. There is one exactly the opposite where lies the danger of this insubordination. Few among them ever inhaled the delicious breezes of Baiæ and Surrentum, few ever loosened their helmets to fill them from the refreshing waters of the Iberus and the Bœtis; but many have enjoyed the umbrage of the vine planted by their grandsires above the spreading and sparkling Liger. How can these find comfort in the damp and dreary woods of inhospitable Britain, or under the tents on its tempestuous wolds? Men in all countries are the creators of their Gods, created in their own similitude; now what hideous demons, devised by the Gauls, frown and grin and

gibber over the Britons! Mockery will burst from the legionary, indignation and vengeance from the barbarian.

AGRICOLA. Each party shall retain its own deities until they insensibly crumble down and drop away. The chief advantage of any temple or place of worship, whether in city or field, is to bring men together in unanimity and amity. They come either for petition or thanksgiving. Is there anyone so insolent and audacious, of such stolidity and impiety, as to believe the Gods are readier to hear him than to hear his neighbour; to believe that one tone of voice or one idiom of language is more agreeable to their ear than another? When children disagree and quarrel, the parent chastises them: is the God less prudent than the parent? Imagination will never form to itself any kinder or more compassionate than ours; and their decline may hereafter be regretted. The Sabines, and also the inhabitants of the regions along the Apennines, lived virtuously, temperately, and happily under their influence. Will future generations see them more virtuous, more temperate, more happy? Egypt, not long ago, sent us Isis; her priests made much of her and of her chastity. We may expect to be favored, by the same tonsured mystics, with the introduction of holy cat and thrice-holy crocodile.

TACITUS. Let us endeavour to preserve whatever is worth preserving, and leave the rest to be swept away by the scythe of time. Maggots will breed in corruption; so will priests. Pleasanter is it to look away from the encroachment of idleness to the trace of industry. What is under the surface of the earth will change the character of what is upon it, men especially. Minerals are abundant in the western parts of Britain. Tin and copper, both anciently and recently, have been thence extracted. It has even been reported that veins of fossil-carbon have been discovered in various directions to the north. Probably the deficiency of wood for fuel to the west, rather than exhaustion of the mineral, caused the Carthaginians to abandon an enterprise which had been once more lucrative. These minerals, and iron also, which is found in the center of the iland, will require the aid of science, and then lead rapidly to civilisation. Gold and silver in no country have produced any such effect, but quite the contrary. We are apt to value most what is least essential to us. Indolent slaves are the collectors of gold; slaves more indolent are its wearers. Iron requires a robust arm to render

it malleable and apply it to its multiform uses; war was its first, but will not be its last; it will unite when it hath ceased to enchain.

AGRICOLA. We must establish schools for the instruction of artificers. The teachers in these will excite at first no jealousy in the old masters. Dogmas will be extinguished in the air of the mine, and deadened by the hammer. Pride will urge the native laborer to be not behindhand with his overseer; and he will collect the grains of knowledge, until at last he finds out where to employ them advantageously.

TACITUS. Languages are the bonds of nations; religions are less efficient. The Latin is now spoken in almost every part of Gaul; in Spain it was earlier disseminated by the sagacious and generous Sertorius. Within the period of little more than a century, what wide and vigorous offshoots it made in that country, which hath sent even to Rome teachers of rhetoric and of composition!

AGRICOLA. Never was conqueror so popular or so prudent as Sertorius; never was one so mild in rule and at the same time so severe in discipline; never one so regardless of himself, so anxious for his country. He who could not bear to see her enslaved, would not enslave another, nor betray the confidence she reposed in him. Of all memorable men, Julius Cæsar alone overcame such complicated difficulties; Alexander had fewer in countries more accessible.*

TACITUS. He was too virtuous and too successful to be endured by the senate and the senate's master. I hope his poisoner saw his shadow before his eyes when he sank under the eunuch's dagger, a runaway on the sands of Pelusium. Do not expect, O Agricola, to avoïd the same invidiousness. May the immortal Gods avert a similar fate!

AGRICOLA. At least until I shall have performed a few similar exploits. I may fail in the enterprise I have undertaken; the greater Julius failed before me: but this I promise you, I will enforce discipline and maintain justice. The prince's favour may protect from the censure of senate and people the delinquency of my subordinates in command, if delinquency there should be; and effete old comrades may catch his nod and beck to compass them round and comfort them, protesting that the accused are worthier of

* It is only in our time that such obstacles have been surmounted, and only by the ill-requited conqueror of Scinde.—W. S. L.

dignities than disgrace; yet will I previously have reprimanded them in presence of my army, and, having performed this duty, I will deliver them over to you, my Cornelius, to fix that stigma on them which neither favor nor ages can obliterate.

TACITUS. Let us be generous; let them enjoy their offices and titles; the duration of a banquet; and, intent on our own immortality, let us permit them to pass away and be forgotten.

XII. OVID AND A PRINCE OF THE GETÆ

A.D. 18

(*Examiner*, April 7th, 1855.)

PRINCE. Art thou really so debilitated in body and in spirits, my poor Ovid, as to fear what even your effeminate Romans rarely do, the approach of Death?

OVID. Hospitable, brave, compassionate host! my final hour indeed approaches me, but very far am I from fearing it.

PRINCE. And yet, to die like a woman or an infant, on a bed, without a wound and succumbing under a mere malady of the heart, is sorrowful, is terrible. I wish it had been permitted thee, by those who sent thee hither, to fall gloriously on the field of battle. Why smilest thou? What a smile! how faint! how sickly!

OVID. Alas my friend! a wish recurred to me very different from yours on the manner of dying; a wish coming with importunity from days long past. Levity in youth is heaviness in age.

PRINCE. Courage, man, courage! Never talk about age until age is nigh. Thou hast every tooth in thy head yet, and able to cope with stouter things than fish, and chicory, and mallow, and nauseous mulse. In my larder are buck and boar; mother Earth's best venison to her activest and bravest. I have known one hoisted up from the grave's edge by sticking manfully to the neck of a boar. Venison is sheepish; boar for me! I can eat it without honey and vinegar; try whether thou canst do it with such condiments. What sayest thou?

OVID. Truly I can say little; and nothing to the purpose, unless thanks are my voice, no less than my appetite is failing me.

PRINCE. I have plenty of both, and would willingly give thee a good share of them if I could. I do think I may help the appetite a little if thou wilt but listen to what I say. The women have been kneading and baking on the stone, ever since sunrise, the finest wheaten flour, sent hither from that ancient city whose walls are

washed by their salt river, which separates the two worlds. Moreover its salt came with it, white as snow. Such cakes and so besprinkled, make the mouths of your priests water as they offer them to marble and maple folk, who methinks have weaker appetite and slower digestion than themselves. O, could you but come down for a moment and see our sparkling cakes! each three spans across! white inside as the salt over them; white and thin too, as that hand of thine now lying above the blanket. No danger is here in the eating of them. Here thou art safe, and shalt soon be well again.

OVID. Illusory the hope but kind the expression, O my friend!

PRINCE. Wishes won't always do, nor prayers either. I have given our oldest and holiest priest seven new-laid goose-eggs to sing seven times for thy recovery.

OVID. Death often comes at man's invocation, but never keeps away.

PRINCE. I have no opinion of him. Death may threaten, but Death is cowardly and often stands aloof from those who disdain to fear him. Marvellously hast thou escaped his snares. Poison and strangulation are Roman obituaries: we reserve them for useless hounds, itinerant foxes, and domestic pilferers. But neither such punishments nor elimination from native land, are denounced for seeing unintentionally an old goat, on his hind legs, rushing at aunt, or mother, or daughter.

OVID. Beware! beware! Augustus is now a God.

PRINCE. Who made him one? He was a man the other day, and hardly that.

OVID. At Rome we are in the practice of creating Gods. Before long you Getæ will be compelled to acknowledge his divinity. I feel ashamed of having done it, although but in poetry. Alas I have done worse even there. Wantonness! Idleness at the root of it!

PRINCE. Nothing is worse than idleness; not even poetry: but don't be vext about it. Didst thou not undertake to teach me the art? Verily didst thou, setting me copies in my own language, while I was sitting down, pushing one hand into my beard and the other into the bush above it. But neither my verses, nor thine in Getic, ran so glibly as what thou repeatedst in thine own tongue. Thine resembled a car running smoothly over the frozen river; mine the same car jolting upon rough masses of ice. After all, a very

effeminate language is your Latin. I think our own metres best suit our own poetry.

OVID. Indeed I think so. But as you and your countrymen heard I was a poet, you desired from me a specimen of our Latin verse, and an attempt to imitate it in the Getic. I was not discouraged nor disconcerted by your laughter; for I love every ingenuous expression of sentiment, and, poet as I am, I smiled at yours, without bitterness and without reserve.

PRINCE. There is one thing among many which I always have admitted in thee; never have I known thee to undervalue another poet, but, on the contrary, to eulogise even thy contemporaries, and, it may be thy superiors, if there are any in thy walk.

OVID. Those are the very men to eulogise.

PRINCE. Horatius Flaccus especially pleases thee.

OVID. No poet has such variety.

PRINCE. There is another, who excelled, it seems, in the same measure as thine, and on whose verses thou hast ever dwelt with delight: Albius Tibullus: and yet there is as much difference in your tones as between a lark's and a cushat's; his being low and tender; thine exalting and exuberant. In this hot weather I have been fain to *read*, for want of other occupation; and I am curious to learn how so gentle a heart could be estranged.

OVID. Gentleness is not always the criterion of stability; nor is it always that men change first. Manly and beauteous in form and features as was Albius, fond too and affectionate and domestic, it may be that Delia, educated in the country, was less indifferent to the flatteries she received at Rome. Inexperienced girls are dazzled by novelty, and the net is drawn over them by a show of deference. True love grows too familiar.

PRINCE. I should have hated her.

OVID. Albius, tho' he dissembled his resentment, thought her undeserving of the love and immortality he had bestowed on her; providing for daughter and mother, he formed another attachment and without malignity against Delia, and too proud for descending to reproach her, bestowed on his fresh favourite the name of Nemesis the Avenger.

PRINCE. Wert thou intimate with him?

OVID. Had he lived, we might have seen each other oftener.

PRINCE. How fared he among the lesser in your poultry yard?

Ovid. Avoiding celebrity, admitting few to his friendship, and keeping aloof from the fraternal feuds of poets, he never was near enough the ridge of the ring to look down on, or even to hear the clamour of, their animosities.

Prince. Thou seemest to have known him thoroughly though briefly.

Ovid. I knew him little but loved him much, and praised him unrepiningly. Tender poetry survives heroic. The myrtles of Idalia spring up fresh and fresh, when the oak of Dodona is shattered root and branch.

Prince. Brave heart! brave and gentle! I know not whether our poetry is better than yours; but our people think it so; and that is enough.

According to thy own account of the matter, ye have brought all yours from another people, and thus older poets. Ye have carried them away with you; and not them only, but also their Gods and Goddesses, and even their shepherds and shepherdesses.

Ovid. We Romans do indeed take whatever Gods we find: some we borrow, others we steal. Never subdue we a city but we capture its Gods, women, and children, and we give them new names according to our fancy: the gentlest an Etruscan. These we place round about the hearthstone, for the boys and girls to play with, being nearly of the same height. The Greeks have furnished our temples with grander and costlier.

Prince. I have discovered one neither grand nor costly in my own pasture. A cow was rubbing the dung or fly off her hide against it. By thy description it must be that God Terminus; the best of them and the most palpably useful, though leading an inactive and solitary life. No; perhaps I may be wrong. Yesterday I saw, upon the vest over the bosom of thy serious and innocent daughter, who had been placing it to her lips and would fain have hidden it from me, a small silver image of a huntress, with a bow in her hand, a quiver across her shoulder, and before her feet a noble dog looking up at her.

Ovid. Poor girl! may that Goddess, if she hears, protect thee!

Prince. She should have taken her to the chase, for she sadly wants exercise, weak and wan, with broken slumber.

Ovid. Ah me! I am sick at heart that she too should suffer.

Prince. Hush! hither she comes. She carries no smile with

her, but at every step, in every place, she lights them up: can she not even in this chamber? answerest thou nothing? gasping only and groaning—art thou worse?

Ovid. I am afraid if she sees me, she will think I am.

Prince. Let me tell her thou art weary and slumbering.

Ovid. Thanks for that kind office. Anxious as I am to see her, after her day of praying and night of vigils, I must forbear that until I am more composed.

Prince. I will hasten and tell her she may come back shortly.

Ovid. Infinite thanks!

Prince. It has required of me as little time to comfort her. Perhaps in this interval you really have dozed.

Ovid. Accept my thanks for that also. Tears relieved and refreshed me. In another half hour she will kiss my brow again.

Prince. I have then done some good to-day, and must be rewarded for it. Thou hast reason to be proud of thy daughter, and, if not very proud of thy disciple in poetry, yet be, in some sort contented. I was shy (we poets always are) of reading a few of my verses to thee.

Ovid. If they are few, let me hear them: I could not do justice to many.

Prince. They are thy own favourite metre and manner.

"Give me thy hand pretty maiden, and thine be the sword and the sceptre."
Sceptre and sword I renounce; give me but give me thy hand.
Pleasant to slay the old wolf, and to take the young eaglet is pleasant,
Pleasanter far to bring home lamb that would wander away.
Many a morning I clomb to the twin-bearing nest of the ringdove,
O could I climb by thy help, where thou art sleeping anight.
Gold shall encircle thy arm and in gold shall thy tresses be braided.
When thou hast fastened a clasp richer than gold around me.

I was half inclined to borrow a thought or two of thine on the occasion; but I feared she might imperfectly understand me, and might question me about some of them, insisting to know where, in the wandering of my thoughts, I had picked up such dainty curiosities. Do not sigh after such things. If they are gone, good riddance.

Ovid. If I sighed at the thought of dying so far from my native land, from the ancient walls of Rome, and from the pleasant orchards of Sulmo, its little translucent streams, its meadows of anemones

and crocuses, its banks of violets latent in the moss, its narrow sequestered groves, wide enough for one happy pair of doves, and its hillside brakes, where innumerable nightingales contend in song. O for the quiet grey villa, with various coloured lichens to enliven it. And then the thick wall, knee-high, supporting the long walk, but wanting support itself, with lavender and caper and rosemary springing up out of every crevice, where the lizard is doubtful of the bee, and the bee is apprehensive of the lizard. The gay vine above, from her crooked and decaying trellace, flaps incessantly the dark unyielding bay. Pardon my wandering. It is all a dream: alas, what else is life?

Prince. A man's country is where his friends are. Hast thou none here?

Ovid. Yes, and kind ones.

Prince. The earth is alike the birthplace and the sepulchre of all. But then your Gods, forsooth! We can beget as good and serviceable here upon the banks of our Danube. We neither know nor care whether, when they leave the earth, they spring up among the stars, as your two last did. By what we hear from travellers who have lately sailed up our river, your Roman priests have propagated two or three additional of late. Surely they had plenty before. Thou hast catalogued and kalendered them neatly on the notch-stick of thy *Fasti*. Most of them are hearty and their wives and daughters comely and fair-spoken; but there are among these females a few ferocious as polecats with sucklings at the teat. Why ransack east or west for others? a train of bald priests behind them, cursing you unless you stand quietly to be pilfered by them, and doing worse than cursing if you ridicule their prostrations and grimaces.

Ovid. You seem angry.

Prince. No wonder. Our privileges are violated: we poets ought to be the only inventors. I have been attempting to read the songs of one highly praised by thee: songs to be accompanied, it seems, by stringed instruments.

Ovid. Those of Horatius Flaccus, named just now?

Prince. The same. Girl after girl! fie upon him.

Ovid. They were all or nearly all the creation of his fancy. However, he had Grecian models.

Prince. Yea verily; and nude as my knuckles. I do think my own poetry is better. My reason is, because it is true, and reaches

at once its destination. When I love, I call the girl by her name and tell her so. When I lead my men to battle, I order the loudest voices to sing my warsong; and there is such a clatter of what ye Romans call *consonants* and *alliterations*, ye would imagine them to be clubs and swords against shields and bucklers. Who is at the door?

OVID. I hear the light step of my daughter. Come in, sweet watcher! Ah! these two last weary days have worn thee down; paler than ever—or my dimness shows thee so.

DAUGHTER. Yes, my own father, it is that. I am quite well again. We both of us were always pale; and this (my flatterers said) made me so like you.

OVID. Two long days my heavy eyes have rolled and toiled after thee. And art thou well again?

DAUGHTER. Dearest! quite well.

OVID. Well enough to carry my bones in their urn to Rome?—Support her! support her! Speak to thy father once more. What screamed she? Delay not; I must and will hear. Dying men may command; speak out.

PRINCE. That even thy bones are banished.

OVID. Bring her back to my last embrace.

DAUGHTER. Father! look on me! Thou lookest hitherward, but seest not thy child. O father! father! canst thou leave me desolate?

PRINCE. Hush! he sleeps.

DAUGHTER. Sleeps? Heaven and Earth! it is only in death he could ever find such calmness.

PRINCE. Then bid death welcome. Patience! patience.

DAUGHTER. Detain me no longer. Let me but close his eyes while the spirit yet hovers. Father! hear. Dost thou feel the pressure of my fingers on those beloved and once loving eyes? Dost thou feel my lips on thine again? My own are less warm—he may.

PRINCE. Be comforted, child, be comforted! Thou art in the house of a friend, and shalt be ere winter in thine own. Look up, and through the window. Lo! the corn is yellow; the moon is large and bright; the winds and waves are tranquil! In this chamber shall be soon no mourner—or but one.

END OF THE GREEK AND ROMAN CONVERSATIONS

IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

ITALIAN

I. TANCREDI * AND CONSTANTIA

(*Heath's Bk. of Beauty*, 1846; *Wks.*, ii., 1846; *Wks.*, v., 1876.)

CONSTANTIA. Is this in mockery, sir? Do you place me under a canopy, and upon what (no doubt) you presume to call a throne, for derision?

TANCREDI. Madonna! if it never were a throne before, henceforward let none approach it but with reverence. The greatest, the most virtuous, of queens and empresses (it were indecorous in such an inferior as I am to praise in your presence aught else in you that raises men's admiration) leaves a throne for homage wherever she has rested.

CONSTANTIA. Count Tancredi! your past conduct ill accords with your present speech. Your courtesy, great as it is, would have been much greater, if you yourself had taken me captive, and had not turned your horse and rode back, on purpose that villanous hands might seize me.

TANCREDI. Knightly hands (I speak it with all submission) are not villanous. I could not in my heart command you to surrender; and I would not deprive a brave man, a man distinguished for deference and loyalty, of the pleasure he was about to enjoy in encountering your two barons. I am confident he never was discourteous.

CONSTANTIA. He was; he took my horse's bridle by the bit, turned his back on me, and would not let me go.

TANCREDI. War sometimes is guilty of such enormities, and even worse.

* Tancredi was crowned 1190, and died of grief at the loss of his only son, 1194. Constantia, daughter of William II. of Sicily, was married to the Emperor Henry VI.—W. S. L.

CONSTANTIA. I would rather have surrendered myself to the most courageous knight in Italy.

TANCREDI. Which may that be?

CONSTANTIA. By universal consent, Tancredi, Count of Lecce.

TANCREDI. To possess the highest courage, is but small glory; to be without it, is a great disgrace.

CONSTANTIA. Loyalty, not only to ladies, but to princes, is the true and solid foundation of it. Count of Lecce! am I not the daughter of your king?

TANCREDI. I recognise in the Lady Constantia the daughter of our late sovran lord, King William, of glorious memory.

CONSTANTIA. Recognise then your queen.

TANCREDI. Our laws, and the supporters of these laws, forbid it.

CONSTANTIA. Is that memory a glorious one, as you call it, which a single year is sufficient to erase? And did not my father nominate me his heir?

TANCREDI. A kingdom is not among the chattels of a king: a people is paled within laws, and not within parks and chases: the powerfullest have no privilege to sport in that inclosure. The barons of the realm and the knights and the people assembled in Palermo, and there by acclamation called and appointed me to govern the state. Certainly the Lady Constantia is nearer to the throne in blood, and much worthier: I said so then. The unanimous reply was that Sicily should be independent of all other lands, and that neither German Kings nor Roman Emperors should controll her.

CONSTANTIA. You must be aware, sir, that an armed resistance to the Emperor is presumptuous and traitorous.

TANCREDI. He has carried fire and sword into my country, and has excited the Genoese and Pisans, men speaking the same language as ourselves, to debark on our coasts, to demolish our villages, and to consume our harvests.

CONSTANTIA. Being a sovran, he possesses the undoubted right.

TANCREDI. Being a Sicilian, I have no less a right to resist him.

CONSTANTIA. Right? Do rights appertain to vassals?

TANCREDI. Even to them; and this one particularly. Were I still a vassal, I should remember that I am a king by election, by birth a Sicilian, and by descent a Norman.

CONSTANTIA. All these fine titles give no right whatever to the throne, from which an insuperable bar precludes you.

TANCREDI AND CONSTANTIA

TANCREDI. What bar can there be which my sword and my people's love are unable to bear down?

CONSTANTIA. Excuse my answer.

TANCREDI. Deign me one, I entreat you, Madonna! although the voice of my country may be more persuasive with me even than yours.

CONSTANTIA. Count Lecce! you are worthy of all honour, excepting that alone which can spring only from lawful descent.

TANCREDI. My father was the first-born of the Norman conqueror, king of Sicily: my mother, in her own right, countess of Lecce. I have no reason to blush at my birth; nor did ever the noble breast which gave me nourishment heave with a sense of ignominy as she pressed me to it. She thought the blessing of the poor equivalent to the blessing of the priest.

CONSTANTIA. I would not refer to her ungently: but she by her alliance set at nought our Holy Father.

TANCREDI. In all her paths, in all her words and actions, she obeyed him.

CONSTANTIA. Our Holy Father?

TANCREDI. Our holiest, our only holy one, "our Father which is in heaven." She wants no apology: precedent is nothing: but remember our ancestors; I say *ours;* for I glory in the thought that they are the same, and so near. Among the early dukes of Normandy, vanquishers of France, and (what is greater) conquerors of England, fewer were born within the pale of wedlock than without. Nevertheless the ladies of our nation were always as faithful to love and duty, as if hoods and surplices and psalms had gone before them, and the church had been the vestibule to the bedchamber.

CONSTANTIA. My cousin the countess was irreproachable, and her virtues have rendered you as popular as your exploits.

Who is this pretty boy who holds down his head so, with the salver in his hand?

TANCREDI. He is my son.

CONSTANTIA. Why then does he kneel before me?

TANCREDI. To teach his father his duty.

CONSTANTIA. You acknowledge the rights of my husband?

TANCREDI. To a fairer possession than fair Sicily.

CONSTANTIA. I must no longer hear this language.

TANCREDI. I utter it from the depths of a heart as pure as the coldest.

CONSTANTIA (*to the boy*). Yes, my sweet child! I accept the refreshments you have been holding so patiently and present so gracefully. But you should have risen from your knees; such a posture is undue to a captive.

BOY. Papa! what did the lady say? Do you ever make ladies captives?

(*To Constantia.*) Run away: I will hold his hands for him.

CONSTANTIA. I intend to run away; but you are quite as dangerous as your father. Count! you must name my ransom.

TANCREDI. Madonna, I received it when you presented your royal hand to my respectful homage. The barons who accompanied you are mounted at the door, in order to reconduct you; and the most noble and the most venerable of mine will be proud of the same permission.

CONSTANTIA. I also am a Sicilian, Tancredi! I also am sensible to the glories of the Norman race. Never shall my husband, if I have any influence over him, be the enemy of so courteous a knight. I could almost say, prosper! prosper! for the defence, the happiness, the example, of our Sicily.

TANCREDI. We may be deprived of territory and power; but never of knighthood. The brave alone can merit it, the brave alone can confer it, the recreant alone can lose it. So long as there is Norman blood in my veins I am a knight: and our blood and our knighthood are given us to defend the sex. Insensate! I had almost said the weaker! and with your eyes before me!

CONSTANTIA. He can not be a rebel, nor a false bad man.

TANCREDI. Lady! the sword which I humbly lay at your feet was, a few years ago, a black misshapen mass of metal: the gold that surrounds it, the jewel that surmounts it, the victories it hath gained, constitute now its least value; it owes the greatest to its position.

II. DANTE AND BEATRICE

(*Hood's Magazine*, 1845; *Wks.*, ii., 1846; *Wks.*, v., 1876.)

DANTE. When you saw me profoundly pierced with love, and reddening and trembling, did it become you, did it become you, you whom I have always called *the most gentle Bice*, to join in the heartless laughter of those girls around you? Answer me. Reply unhesitatingly. Requires it so long a space for dissimulation and duplicity? Pardon! pardon! pardon! My senses have left me: my heart being gone, they follow.

BEATRICE. Childish man! pursuing the impossible.

DANTE. And was it this you laughed at? We can not touch the hem of God's garment; yet we fall at his feet and weep.

BEATRICE. But weep not, gentle Dante! fall not before the weakest of his creatures, willing to comfort, unable to relieve you. Consider a little. Is laughter at all times the signal or the precursor of derision? I smiled, let me avow it, from the pride I felt in your preference of me; and if I laughed, it was to conceal my sentiments. Did you never cover sweet fruit with worthless leaves? Come, do not drop again so soon so faint a smile. I will not have you grave, nor very serious. I pity you; I must not love you: if I might, I would.

DANTE. Yet how much love is due to me, O Bice, who have loved you, as you well remember, even from your tenth year. But it is reported, and your words confirm it, that you are going to be married.

BEATRICE. If so, and if I could have laughed at that, and if my laughter could have estranged you from me, would you blame me?

DANTE. Tell me the truth.

BEATRICE. The report is general.

DANTE. The truth! the truth! Tell me, Bice.

BEATRICE. Marriages, it is said, are made in heaven.

DANTE. Is heaven then under the paternal roof?

BEATRICE. It has been to me hitherto.

DANTE. And now you seek it elsewhere.

BEATRICE. I seek it not. The wiser choose for the weaker. Nay, do not sigh so. What would you have, my grave, pensive Dante? What can I do?

DANTE. Love me.

BEATRICE. I always did.

DANTE. Love me? O bliss of heaven!

BEATRICE. No, no, no! Forbear! Men's kisses are always mischievous and hurtful; everybody says it. If you truly loved me, you would never think of doing so.

DANTE. Nor even this!

BEATRICE. You forget that you are no longer a boy: and that it is not thought proper at your time of life to continue the arm at all about the waist. Beside, I think you would better not put your head against my bosom; it beats too much to be pleasant to you. Why do you wish it? why fancy it can do you any good? It grows no cooler: it seems to grow even hotter. O! how it burns! Go, go; it hurts me too: it struggles, it aches, it sobs. Thank you, my gentle friend, for removing your brow away; your hair is very thick and long; and it began to heat me more than you can imagine. While it was there, I could not see your face so well, nor talk with you so quietly.

DANTE. O! when shall we talk quietly in future?

BEATRICE. When I am married. I shall often come to visit my father. He has always been solitary since my mother's death, which happened in my infancy, long before you knew me.

DANTE. How can he endure the solitude of his house when you have left it?

BEATRICE. The very question I asked him.

DANTE. You did not then wish to—to—go away?

BEATRICE. Ah no! It is sad to be an outcast at fifteen.

DANTE. An outcast?

BEATRICE. Forced to leave a home.

DANTE. For another?

BEATRICE. Childhood can never have a second.

DANTE. But childhood is now over.

BEATRICE. I wonder who was so malicious as to tell my father that? He wanted me to be married a whole year ago.

DANTE. And, Bice, you hesitated?

BEATRICE. No; I only wept. He is a dear good father. I never disobeyed him but in those wicked tears; and they ran the faster the more he reprehended them.

DANTE. Say, who is the happy youth?

BEATRICE. I know not who ought to be happy if you are not.

DANTE. I?

BEATRICE. Surely you deserve all happiness.

DANTE. Happiness! any happiness is denied me. Ah, hours of childhood! bright hours! what fragrant blossoms ye unfold! what bitter fruits to ripen!

BEATRICE. Now can not you continue to sit under that old fig-tree at the corner of the garden? It is always delightful to me to think of it.

DANTE. Again you smile: I wish I could smile too.

BEATRICE. You were usually more grave than I, although very often, two years ago, you told me I was the graver. Perhaps I *was* then indeed; and perhaps I ought to be now: but really I must smile at the recollection, and make you smile with me.

DANTE. Recollection of what in particular?

BEATRICE. Of your ignorance that a fig-tree is the brittlest of trees, especially when it is in leaf; and moreover of your tumble, when your head was just above the wall, and your hand (with the verses in it) on the very coping-stone. Nobody suspected that I went every day to the bottom of our garden, to hear you repeat your poetry on the other side; nobody but yourself: you soon found me out. But on that occasion I thought you might have been hurt; and I clambered up our high peach-tree in the grass-plot nearest the place; and thence I saw Messer Dante, with his white sleeve reddened by the fig-juice, and the seeds sticking to it pertinaciously, and Messer blushing, and trying to conceal his calamity, and still holding the verses. They were all about me.

DANTE. Never shall any verse of mine be uttered from my lips, or from the lips of others, without the memorial of Bice.

BEATRICE. Sweet Dante! in the purity of your soul shall Bice live; as (we are told by the goat-herds and foresters) poor creatures have been found preserved in the serene and lofty regions of the Alps, many years after the breath of life had left them. Already you rival Guido Cavalcante and Cino da Pistoja: you must attempt, nor perhaps shall it be vainly, to surpass them in celebrity.

DANTE. If ever I am above them—and I must be—I know already what angel's hand will have helped me up the ladder. Beatrice, I vow to heaven, shall stand higher than Selvaggia, high and glorious and immortal as that name will be. You have given me joy and sorrow; for the worst of these (I will not say the least) I will confer on you all the generations of our Italy, all the ages of our world. But first (alas, from me you must not have it!) may happiness, long happiness, attend you!

BEATRICE. Ah! those words rend your bosom! why should they?

DANTE. I could go away contented, or almost contented, were I sure of it. Hope is nearly as strong as despair, and greatly more pertinacious and enduring. You have made me see clearly that you never can be mine in this world: but at the same time, O Beatrice, you have made me see quite as clearly that you may and must be mine in another. I am older than you: precedency is given to age, and not to worthiness, in our way to heaven. I will watch over you; I will pray for you when I am nearer to God, and purified from the stains of earth and mortality. He will permit me to behold you, lovely as when I left you. Angels in vain should call me onward.

BEATRICE. Hush, sweetest Dante! hush!

DANTE. It is there, where I shall have caught the first glimpse of you again, that I wish all my portion of Paradise to be assigned me; and there, if far below you, yet within the sight of you, to establish my perdurable abode.

BEATRICE. Is this piety? Is this wisdom? O Dante! And may not I be called away first?

DANTE. Alas! alas! how many small feet have swept off the early dew of life, leaving the path black behind them! But to think that you should go before me! It almost sends me forward on my way, to receive and welcome you. If indeed, O Beatrice, such should be God's immutable will, sometimes look down on me when the song to Him is suspended. Oh! look often on me with prayer and pity; for there all prayers are accepted, and all pity is devoid of pain. Why are you silent?

BEATRICE. It is very sinful not to love all creatures in the world. But is it true, O Dante! that we always love those the most who make us the most unhappy?

DANTE. The remark, I fear, is just.

BEATRICE. Then, unless the Virgin be pleased to change my

inclinations, I shall begin at last to love my betrothed ; for already the very idea of him renders me sad, wearisome, and comfortless. Yesterday he sent me a bunch of violets. When I took them up, delighted as I felt at that sweetest of odours, which you and I once inhaled together——

DANTE. And only once.

BEATRICE. You know why. Be quiet now, and hear me. I dropped the posy ; for around it, hidden by various kinds of foliage, was twined the bridal necklace of pearls. O Dante ! how worthless are the finest of them (and there are many fine ones) in comparison with those little pebbles, some of which (for perhaps I may not have gathered up all) may be still lying under the peach-tree, and some (do I blush to say it ?) under the fig. Tell me not who threw these, nor for what. But you know you were always thoughtful, and sometimes reading, sometimes writing, and sometimes forgetting me, while I waited to see the crimson cap, and the two bay-leaves I fastened in it, rise above the garden-wall. How silently you are listening, if you do listen !

DANTE. Oh ! could my thoughts incessantly and eternally dwell among these recollections, undisturbed by any other voice—undistracted by any other presence ! Soon must they abide with me alone, and be repeated by none but me—repeated in the accents of anguish and despair ! Why could you not have held in the sad home of your heart that necklace and those violets ?

BEATRICE. My Dante ! we must all obey—I my father, you your God. He will never abandon you.

DANTE. I have ever sung, and will for ever sing, the most glorious of His works : and yet, O Bice ! He abandons me, He casts me off ; and He uses your hand for this infliction.

BEATRICE. Men travel far and wide, and see many on whom to fix or transfer their affections ; but we maidens have neither the power nor the will. Casting our eyes on the ground, we walk along the straight and narrow road prescribed for us ; and, doing thus, we avoid in great measure the thorns and entanglements of life. We know we are performing our duty ; and the fruit of this knowledge is contentment. Season after season, day after day, you have made me serious, pensive, meditative, and almost wise. Being so little a girl, I was proud that you, so much taller, should lean on my shoulder to overlook my work. And greatly more proud was I when

in time you taught me several Latin words, and then whole sentences, both in prose and verse, pasting a strip of paper over, or obscuring with impenetrable ink, those passages in the poets which were beyond my comprehension, and might perplex me. But proudest of all was I when you began to reason with me. What will now be my pride if you are convinced by the first arguments I ever have opposed to you; or if you only take them up and try if they are applicable. Certainly do I know (indeed, indeed I do) that even the patience to consider them will make you happier. Will it not then make me so? I entertain no other wish. Is not this true love?

DANTE. Ah yes! the truest, the purest, the least perishable, but not the sweetest. Here are the rue and hyssop; but where the rose!

BEATRICE. Wicked must be whatever torments you: and will you let love do it? Love is the gentlest and kindest breath of God. Are you willing that the Tempter should intercept it, and respire it polluted into your ear? Do not make me hesitate to pray to the Virgin for you, nor tremble lest she look down on you with a reproachful pity. To her alone, O Dante! dare I confide all my thoughts. Lessen not my confidence in my only refuge.

DANTE. God annihilate a power so criminal! O, could my love flow into your breast with hers! It should flow with equal purity.

BEATRICE. You have stored my little mind with many thoughts; dear because they are yours, and because they are virtuous. May I not, O my Dante! bring some of them back again to your bosom; as the *Contadina* lets down the string from the cottage-beam in winter, and culls a few bunches of the soundest for the master of the vineyard? You have not given me glory that the world should shudder at its eclipse. To prove that I am worthy of the smallest part of it, I must obey God; and, under God, my father. Surely the voice of Heaven comes to us audibly from a parent's lips. You will be great, and, what is above all greatness, good.

DANTE. Rightly and wisely, my sweet Beatrice, have you spoken in this estimate. Greatness is to goodness what gravel is to porphyry: the one is a moveable accumulation, swept along the surface of the earth; the other stands fixed and solid and alone, above the violence of war and of the tempest; above all that is residuous of a wasted world. Little men build up great ones; but the snow

colossus soon melts: the good stand under the eye of God; and therefore stand.

BEATRICE. Now you are calm and reasonable, listen to Bice. You must marry.

DANTE. Marry?

BEATRICE. Unless you do, how can we meet again unreservedly? Worse, worse than ever! I can not bear to see those large heavy tears following one another, heavy and slow as nuns at the funeral of a sister. Come, I will kiss off one, if you will promise me faithfully to shed no more. Be tranquil, be tranquil; only hear reason. There are many who know you; and all who know you must love you. Don't you hear me? Why turn aside? and why go farther off? I will have that hand. It twists about as if it hated its confinement. Perverse and peevish creature! you have no more reason to be sorry than I have; and you have many to the contrary which I have not. Being a man, you are at liberty to admire a variety, and to make a choice. Is that no comfort to you?

DANTE.

Bid this bosom cease to grieve?
  Bid these eyes fresh objects see?
Where 's the comfort to believe
  None might once have rivall'd me?
What! my freedom to receive?
  Broken hearts, are they the free?
For another can I live
  When I may not live for thee? [1]

BEATRICE. I will never be fond of you again if you are so violent. We have been together too long, and we may be noticed.

DANTE. Is this our last meeting? If it is—and that it is, my heart has told me—you will not, surely you will not refuse——

BEATRICE. Dante! Dante! they make the heart sad after: do not wish it. But prayers—O, how much better are they! how much quieter and lighter they render it! They carry it up to heaven with them; and those we love are left behind no longer.

[1] *Gebir*, etc., 1831, "To Ianthe."

III. DANTE AND GEMMA DONATI

(*Wks.*, ii., 1846 ; *Wks.*, v., 1876.)

GEMMA. We have now been blessed with seven children, my dear husband !

DANTE. And the newly-born, as always happens, is the fairest, lovely as were all the rest.

GEMMA. Whether it so happens or not, we always think so, the mother in particular. And your tenderness is like a mother's.

DANTE. What a sweet smile is that, my Gemma ! But do not talk long, although you talk with the voice and the serenity of an angel. How fresh you look ! escaped from so great a danger, and so recently. A smile is ever the most bright and beautiful with a tear upon it. What is the dawn without its dew ? The tear is rendered by the smile precious above the smile itself.

There is something playful, I perceive, in your thoughts, my little wife ! Can not you as readily trust me with them as with the playfulness about them ?

GEMMA. I do not know whether I can.

DANTE. Beware ! I shall steady those lips with kisses if they are not soon more quiet. Irresolute ! why do not you tell me at once what is thrilling and quivering at each corner of your beautiful mouth ?

GEMMA. I will, my Dante ! But already it makes me graver.

Healthy as is the infant, it was predicted by the astrologer and caster of nativities, and the prediction has been confirmed by the most intelligent of nurses, that it must be our last.

DANTE. While I look on it, I think I could not love another so well.

GEMMA. And yet you have loved them all equally, tenderest of fathers, best of husbands !

DANTE. Say *happiest*, my Gemma ! It was not always that you could have said it ; and it may not be always ; but it shall be now.

GEMMA. Well spoken ! yes, it shall. Therefore promise me that henceforward you will never again be a suitor for embassies abroad,

or nail down your noble intellect to the coarse-grained wood of council-boards.

DANTE. I can easily and willingly make that promise.

GEMMA. Recollecting that they have caused you trouble enough already.

DANTE. If they alone had occupied my mind, they would have contracted and abased it. The larger a plant is, the sooner it sickens and withers in close confinement, and in a place too low for it. But a mind that has never been strained to exertions, and troubled by anxieties, will never project far any useful faculty. The stream must swell before it fertilises. It is pleasant to gaze on green meadows and gentle declivities: but the soul, O my Gemma, that men look up to with long wonder, is suspended on rocks, and exposed to be riven by lightning. The eagle neither builds his nest nor pursues his quarry in the marsh.

GEMMA. Should my Dante then in the piazza ?

DANTE. However, we must all, when called upon, serve our country as we can best.

GEMMA. Despicable is the man who loveth not his country : but detestable is he who prefers even his country to her who worships him, supremely on earth, and solely.

DANTE. To me a city is less than a home. The world around me is but narrow : the present age is but annual. I will plant my Tree in Paradise ; I will water it with the waters of immortality ; and my beloved shall repose beneath its shadow.

GEMMA. O Dante ! there are many who would be contented to die early, that after-ages might contemplate them as the lover did ; young, ardent, radiant, uncrossed by fortune, and undisturbed by any anxiety but the gentlest. I am happier than poetry, with all its praise and all its fiction, could render me : let another be glorious. I have been truly blessed.

If Florence had never exiled you, if she had honoured you as highly as she must honour you hereafter, tell me, could you have loved her as you loved your Bice ?

DANTE. You also loved Bice.

GEMMA. Answer me plainly and directly, sly evader !

DANTE. We can hardly love the terrestrial as we love the heavenly. The stars that fall on the earth are not stars of eternal light ; they are not our hope ; they are not our guidance ; they often blight, they

never purify. Distinctions might have become too precious in my sight, if never a thought of her had intervened.

GEMMA. Indignant as you were at the injustice of your fellow-citizens, did not the recollection of the little maid honey your bitter bread, and quite console you?

DANTE. I will pour into your faithful bosom not only all my present love, but all my past. I lost my country; I went into another; into many others. To men like me, irksome is it, O Gemma! to mount the stairs of princes; hard to beseech their favour; harder to feel the impossibility of requiting it; hardest of all to share it with the worthless. But I carried with me everywhere the memory of Bice: I carried with me that palladium which had preserved the citadel of my soul. Under her guard what evil could enter it? Before her image how faintly and evanescently fell on me the shadows of injury and grief!

GEMMA. Brave, brave Dante! I love you for all things; nor least for your love of her. It was she, under God, who rendered you the perfect creature I behold in you. She animated you with true glory when she inspired you with the purity of her love. Worthier of it than I am, she left you on earth for me.

DANTE. And with nothing on earth to wish beyond.

Ought I to be indignant that my country has neglected me? Do not men in all countries like those best who most resemble them? And would you wish me to resemble the multitude who are deluded? or would you rather that I were seated among the select who are in a situation to delude? My Gemma! I could never, by any knowledge or discipline, teach foxes to be honest, wolves to be abstemious, or vipers to be grateful. For the more ravenous I have excavated a pitfall, deep and durable as the foundations of the earth; to the reptile I toss the file. Let us love those who love us, and be contented to teach those who will hear us. Neither the voice nor the affections can extend beyond a contracted circle. But we may carry a wand with us and mark out with it that circle in every path of life. Never in future will I let men approach too near me. Familiarities are the aphides that imperceptibly suck out the juices intended for the germ of love. Contented with the few who can read my heart, and proud, my sweet Gemma, of the precious casket that encloses it, I am certainly this day the happiest of men.

GEMMA. To-morrow you shall be happier.

DANTE. By what possibility?

GEMMA. It is too late in the evening to carry our infant to the baptismal font: but to-morrow, early in the morning, in the presence of God and angels, in the presence of the blessed Virgin, I name it Beatrice.

DANTE. Gemma! she hears thee. Gemma! she loves thee for it more than she ever could love me: for this is heavenly.

GEMMA. How much I owe her! Under her influence hath grown up into full maturity the happiness of my existence.

DANTE. And of mine. Modesty is the bridesmaid of Concord. She not only hangs her garland on the door of the nuptial chamber, but she bestrews with refreshing herbs the whole apartment every day of life. Without her where is Harmony? or what is Beauty? Without her, the sight of returning spring has bitter pangs in it: without her, the songs of love in the woodland, and the symbols of mated innocence on the tree apart, afflict the bosom, sensitive no longer but to reminiscences and wrath. Can it be wondered that she who held my first affections holds them yet? the same spirit in another form, the same beauty in another countenance, the same expression in another voice—the girl Beatrice in the bride Gemma. O how much more than bride! but bride still!

GEMMA. Kiss me, Dante! And now let me sleep! Gently! Do not disturb the child—your Beatrice to-morrow. Further, further from the cradle! Your eyes upon her would surely awaken her. Beloved! beloved! how considerate and careful! I am sleepy—can I sleep? I am too happy.

IV. BOCCACCIO AND PETRARCA

(*Imag. Convers.*, iv., 1829; *Wks.*, i., 1846; *Wks.*, iv., 1876.)

BOCCACCIO. Remaining among us, I doubt not that you would soon receive the same distinctions in your native country as others have conferred upon you: indeed in confidence I may promise it. For greatly are the Florentines ashamed, that the most elegant of their writers and the most independent of their citizens lives in exile, by the injustice he had suffered in the detriment done to his property, through the intemperate administration of their laws.

PETRARCA. Let them recall me soon and honourably: then perhaps I may assist them to remove their ignominy, which I carry about with me wherever I go, and which is pointed out by my exotic laurel.

BOCCACCIO. There is, and ever will be, in all countries and under all governments, an ostracism for their greatest men.

PETRARCA. At present we will talk no more about it. To-morrow I pursue my journey toward Padua, where I am expected; where some few value and esteem me, honest and learned and ingenious men; although neither those Transpadane regions, nor whatever extends beyond them, have yet produced an equal to Boccaccio.

BOCCACCIO. Then, in the name of friendship! do not go thither: form such rather from your fellow-citizens. I love my equals heartily; and shall love them the better when I see them raised up here, from our own mother earth, by you.

PETRARCA. Let us continue our walk.

BOCCACCIO. If you have been delighted (and you say you have been), at seeing again, after so long an absence, the house and garden wherein I have placed the relaters of my stories, as reported in the *Decameron*, come a little way further up the ascent, and we will pass through the vineyard on the west of the villa. You will see presently another on the right, lying in its warm little garden close to the road-side, the scene lately of somewhat that would have looked well, as illustration, in the midst of your Latin reflections. It shows us that

people the most serious and determined may act at last contrariwise to the line of conduct they have laid down.

PETRARCA. Relate it to me, Messer Giovanni; for you are able to give reality the merits and charms of fiction, just as easily as you give fiction the semblance, the stature, and the movement of reality.

BOCCACCIO. I must here forego such powers, if in good truth I possess them.

PETRARCA. This long green alley, defended by box and cypresses, is very pleasant. The smell of box, although not sweet, is more agreeable to me than many that are; I cannot say from what resuscitation of early and tender feeling. The[1] cypress too seems to strengthen the nerves of the brain. Indeed, I delight in the odour of most trees and plants.

Will not that dog hurt us? he comes closer.

BOCCACCIO. Dog! thou hast the colours of a magpie and the tongue of one: prythee be quiet: art thou not ashamed?

PETRARCA. Verily he trots off, comforting his angry belly with his plenteous tail, flattened and bestrewn under it. He looks back, going on, and puffs out his upper lip without a bark.

BOCCACCIO. These creatures are more accessible to temperate and just rebuke than the creatures of our species, usually angry with less reason, and from no sense, as dogs are, of duty. Look into that white arcade! Surely it was white the other day: and now I perceive it is still so: the setting sun tinges it with yellow.

PETRARCA. The house has nothing of either the rustic or the magnificent about it; nothing quite regular, nothing much varied. If there is anything at all affecting, as I fear there is, in the story you are about to tell me, I could wish the edifice itself bore externally some little of the interesting, that I might hereafter turn my mind toward it, looking out of the catastrophe, though not away from it. But I do not even find the peculiar and uncostly decoration of our Tuscan villas: the central turret, round which the kite perpetually circles, in search of pigeons or smaller prey, borne onward, like the Flemish skaiter, by effortless will in motionless progression. The view of Fiesole must be lovely from that window; but I fancy to myself it loses the cascade under the single high arch of the Mugnone.

BOCCACCIO. I think so. In this villa—come rather further off: the inhabitants of it may hear us, if they should happen to be in the

[1] From "The" to "plants" added in 2nd ed.

arbour, as most people are at the present hour of day—in this villa, Messer Francesco, lives Monna Tita Monalda, who tenderly loved Amadeo degli Oricellari. She however was reserved and coy; and father Pietro de' Pucci, an enemy to the family of Amadeo, told her never more to think of him; for that just before he knew her, he had thrown his arm round the neck of Nunciata Righi, his mother's maid, calling her most immodestly a sweet creature, and of a whiteness that marble would split with envy at.

Monna Tita trembled and turned pale. "Father, is the girl really so very fair?" said she anxiously.

"Madonna," replied the father, "after confession she is not much amiss: white she is, with a certain tint of pink, not belonging to her, but coming over her, as through the wing of an angel pleased at the holy function: and her breath is such, the very ear smells it: poor innocent sinful soul! Hei! The wretch, Amadeo, would have endangered her salvation."

"She must be a wicked girl to let him," said Monna Tita. "A young man of good parentage and education would not dare to do such a thing, of his own accord. I will see him no more however. But it was before he knew me: and it may not be true. I can not think any young woman would let a young man do so, even in the last hour before Lent. Now in what month was it supposed to be?"

"Supposed to be!" cried the father indignantly: "in June; I say in June."

"O! that now is quite impossible: for on the second of July, forty-one days from this, and at this very hour of it, he swore to me eternal love and constancy. I will inquire of him whether it is true: I will charge him with it."

She did. Amadeo confessed his fault, and, thinking it a venial one, would have taken and kissed her hand as he asked forgiveness.

Petrarca. Children! children! I will go into the house, and if their relatives, as I suppose, have approved of the marriage, I will endeavour to persuade the young lady that a fault like this, on the repentance of her lover, is not unpardonable. But first, is Amadeo a young man of loose habits?

Boccaccio. Less than our others: in fact, I never heard of any deviation, excepting this.

Petrarca. Come then with me.

Boccaccio. Wait a little.

PETRARCA. I hope the modest Tita, after a trial, will not be too severe with him.

BOCCACCIO. Severity is far from her nature; but, such is her purity and innocence, she shed many and bitter tears at his confession, and declared her unalterable determination of taking the veil among the nuns of Fiesole. Amadeo fell at her feet, and wept upon them. She pushed him from her gently, and told him she would still love him, if he would follow her example, leave the world, and become a friar of San Marco. Amadeo was speechless; and, if he had not been so, he never would have made a promise he intended to violate. She retired from him: after a time he arose, less wounded than benumbed by the sharp uncovered stones in the garden walk: and, as a man who fears to fall from a precipice goes farther from it than is necessary, so did Amadeo shun the quarter where the gate is, and, oppressed by his agony and despair, throw his arms across the sun-dial and rest his brow upon it, hot as it must have been on a cloudless day in August. When the evening was about to close, he was aroused by the cries of rooks over-head: they flew toward Florence, and beyond: he too went back into the city.

Tita fell sick from her inquietude. Every morning ere sunrise did Amadeo return, but could hear only from the labourers in the field that Monna Tita was ill, because she had promised to take the veil and had not taken it, knowing, as she must do, that the heavenly bridegroom is a bridegroom never to be trifled with, let the spouse be young and beautiful as she may be. Amadeo had often conversed with the peasant of the farm, who much pitied so worthy and loving a gentleman, and finding him one evening fixing some thick and high stakes in the ground, offered to help him. After due thanks, "It is time," said the peasant, "to rebuild the hovel and watch the grapes."

He went into the stable, collected the old pillars of his autumnal observatory, drove them into the ground, and threw the matting over them.

"This is my house," cried he. "Could I never, in my stupidity, think about rebuilding it before? Bring me another mat or two: I will sleep here to-night, to-morrow night, every night, all autumn, all winter."

He slept there, and was consoled at last by hearing that Monna Tita was out of danger, and recovering from her illness by spiritual means. His heart grew lighter day after day. Every evening did he

observe the rooks, in the same order, pass along the same track in the heavens, just over San Marco: and it now occurred to him, after three weeks indeed, that Monna Tita had perhaps some strange idea, in choosing his monastery, not unconnected with the passage of these birds. He grew calmer upon it, until he asked himself whether he might hope. In the midst of this half-meditation, half-dream, his whole frame was shaken by the voices, however low and gentle, of two monks, coming from the villa and approaching him. He would have concealed himself under this bank whereon we are standing; but they saw him and called him by name. He now perceived that the younger of them was Guiberto Oddi, with whom he had been at school about six or seven years ago, and who admired him for his courage and frankness when he was almost a child.

"Do not let us mortify poor Amadeo," said Guiberto to his companion. "Return to the road: I will speak a few words to him, and engage him (I trust) to comply with reason and yield to necessity." The elder monk, who saw he should have to climb the hill again, assented to the proposal, and went into the road. After the first embraces and few words, "Amadeo! Amadeo!" said Guiberto, "it was love that made me a friar; let anything else make you one."

"Kind heart!" replied Amadeo. "If death or religion, or hatred of me, deprives me of Tita Monalda, I will die, where she commanded me, in the cowl. It is you who prepare her then to throw away her life and mine!"

"Hold! Amadeo!" said Guiberto, "I officiate together with good father Fontesecco, who invariably falls asleep amid our holy function."

Now, Messer Francesco, I must inform you that father Fontesecco has the heart of a flower. It feels nothing, it wants nothing; it is pure and simple, and full of its own little light. Innocent as a child, as an angel, nothing ever troubled him, but how to devise what he should confess. A confession costs him more trouble to invent than any Giornata in my *Decameron* cost me. He was once overheard to say on this occasion, "God forgive me in his infinite mercy, for making it appear that I am a little worse than he has chosen I should be!" He is temperate; for he never drinks more than exactly half the wine and water set before him. In fact, he drinks the wine and leaves the water, saying, "We have the same water up at San Domenico: we send it hither: it would be uncivil to take back our

own gift, and still more to leave a suspicion that we thought other people's wine poor beverage." Being afflicted by the gravel, the physician of his convent advised him, as he never was fond of wine, to leave it off entirely: on which he said, "I know few things; but this I know well: in water there is often gravel, in wine never. It hath pleased God to afflict me, and even to go a little out of his way in order to do it, for the greater warning to other sinners. I will drink wine, brother Anselmini, and help his work."

I have led you away from the younger monk.

"While father Fontesecco is in the first stage of beatitude, chanting through his nose the benedicite, I will attempt," said Guiberto, "to comfort Monna Tita."

"Good blessed Guiberto!" exclaimed Amadeo in a transport of gratitude, at which Guiberto smiled with his usual grace and suavity. "O Guiberto! Guiberto! my heart is breaking. Why should she want you to comfort her—but—comfort her then!" and he covered his face within his hands.

"Remember," said Guiberto placidly, "her uncle is bedridden: her aunt never leaves him: the servants are old and sullen, and will stir for nobody. Finding her resolved, as they believe, to become a nun, they are little assiduous in their services. Humour her, if none else does, Amadeo; let her fancy that you intend to be a friar; and, for the present, walk not on these grounds."

"Are you true, or are you traitorous?" cried Amadeo, grasping his friend's hand most fiercely.

"Follow your own counsel, if you think mine insincere," said the young friar, not withdrawing his hand, but placing the other on Amadeo's. "Let me however advise you to conceal yourself; and I will direct Silvestrina to bring you such accounts of her mistress as may at least make you easy in regard to her health. Adieu."

Amadeo was now rather tranquil; more than he had ever been, not only since the displeasure of Monna Tita, but since the first sight of her. Profuse at all times in his gratitude to Silvestrina, whenever she brought him good news, news better than usual, he pressed her to his bosom. Silvestrina Pioppi is about fifteen; slender, fresh, intelligent, lively, good-humoured, sensitive; and anyone but Amadeo might call her very pretty.

PETRARCA. Ah Giovanni! here I find your heart obtaining the mastery over your vivid and volatile imagination. Well have you

said, the maiden being really pretty, anyone but Amadeo might think her so. On the banks of the Sorga there are beautiful maids: the woods and the rocks have a thousand times repeated [1] it: I heard but one echo: I heard but one name: I would have fled from them for ever at another.

Boccaccio. Francesco, do not beat your breast just now: wait a little. Monna Tita would take the veil. The fatal certainty was announced to Amadeo by his true Guiberto, who had earnestly and repeatedly prayed her to consider the thing a few months longer.

"I will see her first! By all the saints of heaven I will see her!" cried the desperate Amadeo, and ran into the house, toward the still apartment of his beloved. Fortunately Guiberto was neither less active nor less strong than he, and overtaking him at the moment, drew him into the room opposite. "If you will be quiet and reasonable, there is yet a possibility left you," said Guiberto in his ear, although perhaps he did not think it. "But if you utter a voice or are seen by anyone, you ruin the fame of her you love, and obstruct your own prospects for ever. It being known that you have not slept in Florence these several nights, it will be suspected by the malicious that you have slept in the villa with the connivance of Monna Tita. Compose yourself: answer nothing: rest where you are: do not add a worse imprudence to a very bad one: I promise you my assistance, my speedy return and best counsel: you shall be released at daybreak." He ordered Silvestrina to supply the unfortunate youth with the cordials usually administered to the uncle, or with the rich old wine they were made of; and she performed the order with such promptitude and attention, that he was soon in some sort refreshed.

Petrarca. I pity him from my soul, poor young man! Alas, we are none of us, by original sin, free from infirmities or from vices.

Boccaccio. If we could find a man exempt by nature from vices and infirmities, we should find one not worth knowing: he would also be void of tenderness and compassion. What allowances then could his best friends expect from him in their frailties? What help, consolation, and assistance, in their misfortunes? We are in the midst of a workshop well stored with sharp instruments: we may do

[1] 1st ed. reads: "a thousand times told me so; and I would have fled from them for saying it. Giovanni! *they* could feel it! Boccaccio. Francesco," etc.

ill with many, unless we take heed ; and good with all, if we will but learn how to employ them.

PETRARCA. There is somewhat of reason in this. You strengthen me to proceed with you : I can bear the rest.

BOCCACCIO. Guiberto had [1] taken leave of his friend, and had advanced a quarter of a mile, which (as you perceive) is nearly the whole way, on his return to the monastery, when he was overtaken by some peasants, who were hastening homeward from Florence. The information he collected from them made him determine to retrace his steps. He entered the room again, and, from the intelligence he had just acquired, gave Amadeo the assurance that Monna Tita must delay her entrance into the convent ; for that the abbess had that moment gone down the hill on her way toward Siena, to venerate some holy relics, carrying with her three candles, each five feet long, to burn before them ; which candles contained many particles of the myrrh presented at the nativity of our Saviour by the wise men of the East. Amadeo breathed freely, and was persuaded by Guiberto to take another cup of old wine, and to eat with him some cold roast kid, which [2] had been offered him for *merenda*.* After the agitation of his mind a heavy sleep fell upon the lover, coming almost before Guiberto departed ; so heavy indeed that Silvestrina was alarmed. It was her apartment ; and she performed the honours of it as well as any lady in Florence could have done.

PETRARCA. I easily believe it : the poor are more attentive than the rich, and the young are more compassionate than the old.

BOCCACCIO. Oh Francesco ! what inconsistent creatures are we !

PETRARCA. True, indeed ! I now foresee the end. He might have done worse.

BOCCACCIO. I think so.

PETRARCA. He almost deserved it.

BOCCACCIO. I think that too.

PETRARCA. Wretched mortals ! our passions for ever lead us into this, or worse.

BOCCACCIO. Ay, truly ; much worse generally.

[1] From " had " to " He " added in 2nd ed.

[2] From " which " to " *merenda* " added in 2nd ed.

* *Merenda* is luncheon, *meridiana*, eaten by the wealthier at the hour when the peasants dine.—W. S. L.

PETRARCA. The very twig on which the flowers grew lately, scourges us to the bone in its maturity.

BOCCACCIO. Incredible will it be to you, and, by my faith! to me it was hardly credible. Certain however is it, that Guiberto on his return by sunrise found Amadeo in the arms of sleep.

PETRARCA. Not at all, not at all incredible: the truest lover would have done the same, exhausted by suffering.

BOCCACCIO. He was truly in the arms of sleep; but, Francesco, there was another pair of arms about him, worth twenty such, divinity as he is. A loud burst of laughter from Guiberto did not arouse either of the parties: but Monna Tita heard it, and rushed into the room, tearing her hair, and invoking the saints of heaven against the perfidy of man. She seized Silvestrina by that arm which appeared the most offending: the girl opened her eyes, turned on her face, rolled out of bed, and threw herself at the feet of her mistress, shedding tears, and wiping them away with the only piece of linen about her. Monna Tita too shed tears. Amadeo still slept profoundly; a flush, almost of crimson, overspreading his cheeks. Monna Tita led away, after some pause, poor Silvestrina, and made her confess the whole. She then wept more and more, and made the girl confess it again, and explain her confession. "I cannot believe such wickedness," she cried: "he could not be so hardened. O sinful Silvestrina! how will you ever tell father Doni one half! one quarter! He never can absolve you."

PETRARCA. Giovanni! I am glad I did not enter the house; you were prudent in restraining me. I have no pity for the youth at all: never did one so deserve to lose a mistress.

BOCCACCIO. Say, rather, to gain a wife.

PETRARCA. Absurdity! impossibility!

BOCCACCIO. He won her fairly; strangely, and on a strange table, as he played his game. Listen! that guitar is Monna Tita's. Listen! what a fine voice (do not you think it?) is Amadeo's.

AMADEO (*singing*).

> Oh! I have err'd!
> I laid my hand upon the nest
> (Tita, I sigh to sing the rest)
> Of the wrong bird.

PETRARCA. She laughs too at it! Ah! Monna Tita was made by nature to live on this side of Fiesole.

V. CHAUCER, BOCCACCIO, AND PETRARCA

(*Imag. Convers.*, iv., 1829 ; *Wks.*, i., 1846 ; *Wks.*, iv., 1876.)

PETRARCA. You have kept your promise like an Englishman, Ser* Geoffreddo: welcome to Arezzo.[1] This gentleman is Messer Giovanni Boccaccio, of whose unfinished *Decameron*, which I opened to you in manuscript, you expressed your admiration when we met at Florence in the spring.

BOCCACCIO. I was then at Certaldo, my native place, filling up my stories, and have only to regret that my acquaintance with one so friendly and partial to me has been formed so late.

How did Rome answer your expectations, sir?

CHAUCER. I had passed through Pisa; of which city the Campo Santo, now nearly finished, after half a century from its foundation, and the noble street along the Arno,† are incomparably more beautiful than anything in Rome.

PETRARCA. That is true. I have heard, however, some of your countrymen declare that Oxford is equal to Pisa, in the solidity, extent, and costliness of its structures.

CHAUCER. Oxford is the most beautiful of our cities: it would be a very fine one if there were no houses in it.

PETRARCA. How is that?

CHAUCER. The lath-and-plaster white-washed houses look despicably mean under the colleges.

BOCCACCIO. Few see anything in the same point of view. It would gratify me highly, if you would tell me with all the frankness of your character and your country, what struck you most in "*the capital of the world*," as the vilest slaves in it call their great open cloaca.

* *Ser* is commonly used by Boccaccio and others for *Messer*.—W. S. L.

[1] But Petrarca was at this time resident at Arqua.

† The Corso in Rome is now much finer. P. Leopold dismantled the walls of Pisa, and demolished more than fifty towers and turrets. Every year castellated mansions are modernised in Italy.—W. S. L.

CHAUCER. After the remains of antiquity, I know not whether anything struck me more forcibly than the superiority of our English churches and monasteries.

BOCCACCIO. I do not wonder that yours should be richer and better built, although I never heard before that they are: for the money that is collected in Rome or elsewhere, by the pontiffs, is employed for the most part in the aggrandisement of their families. Messer Francesco, although he wears the habit of a churchman, speaks plainlier on these subjects than a simple secular, as I am, dares to do.

PETRARCA. We may however, I trust, prefer the beauty and variety of our scenery to that of most in the world. Tuscany is less diversified, and, excepting [1] the mountains above Camaldoli and Laverna, less sublime, than many other parts of Italy; yet where does Nature smile with more contented gaiety than in the vicinity of Florence? Great part of our sea-coast along the Mediterranean is uninteresting; yet it is beautiful in its whole extent from France to Massa. Afterward there is not a single point of attraction till you arrive at Terracina. The greater part of the way round the peninsula, from Terracina to Pesaro, has its changes of charms: thenceforward all is flat again.

BOCCACCIO. We can not travel in the most picturesque and romantic regions of our Italy, from the deficiency of civilisation in the people.

CHAUCER. Yet, Messer Giovanni, I never journeyed so far through so enchanting a scenery as there is almost the whole of the way from Arezzo to Rome, particularly round Terni and Narni and Perugia.

Our master Virgil speaks of dreams that swarm upon the branches of one solitary elm. In this country more than dreams swarm upon every spray and leaf; and every murmur of wood or water comes from and brings with it inspiration. Never shall I forget the hour when my whole soul was carried away from me by the cataract of Terni, and when all things existing were lost to me in its stupendous waters. The majestic woods that bowed their heads before it; the sun that was veiling his glory in mild translucent clouds over the furthest course of the river; the moon, that suspended her orb in the very centre of it; seemed ministering Powers, themselves in undiminished admiration of the marvel they had been looking on

[1] From "excepting" to "Laverna" added in 2nd ed.

through unnumbered ages. What are the works of man in comparison with this? What, indeed, are the other works of Nature?

PETRARCA.[1] Ser Giovanni! this, which appears too great even for Nature, was not too great for man. Our ancestors achieved it. Curius Dentatus, in his consulate, forbade the waters of the Velinus to inundate so beautiful a valley, and threw them down this precipice into the Nar. When the traces of all their other victories, all their other labours, shall have disappeared, this work of the earlier and the better Romans shall continue to perform its office, shall produce its full effect, and shall astonish the beholder as it astonished him at its first completion.

CHAUCER. I was not forgetful that we heard the story from our guide: but I thought him a boaster: and now for the first time I learn that any great power hath been exerted for any great good. Roads were levelled for aggression, and vast edifices were constructed either for pride or policy, to commemorate some victory, to reward the Gods for giving it, or to keep them in the same temper. There is nothing of which men appear to have been in such perpetual apprehension, as the inconstancy of the deities they worship.

Many thanks, Ser Francesco, for reminding me of what the guide asserted, and for teaching me the truth. I thought the fall of the Velinus not only the work of Nature, but the most beautiful she had ever made on earth. My prevention, in regard to the country about Rome, was almost as great, and almost as unjust to Nature, from what I had heard of it both at home and abroad. In the approach to the eternal city, she seems to have surrendered much of her wildness, and to have assumed all her stateliness and sedateness, all her awfulness and severity. The vast plain toward the sea abases the soul together with it; while the hills on the left, chiefly those of Tusculum and of Tibur, overshadow and almost overwhelm it with obscure remembrances, some of them descending from the heroic ages, others from an age more miraculous than the heroic, the Herculean infancy of immortal Rome. Soracte comes boldly forward, and stands alone. Round about, on every side, we behold an infinity of baronial castles, many moated and flanked with towers and bastions; many following the direction of the precipitous hills, of which they cover the whole summit. Tracts of land, where formerly stood entire nations, are now the property of some rude

[1] From "PETRARCA" to "at home and abroad" added in 2nd ed.

baron, descendant of a murderer too formidable for punishment, or of a robber too rich for it: and the ruins of cities, which had sunk in luxury when England was one wide forest, are carted off by a herd of slaves and buffaloes, to patch up the crevices of a fort or dungeon.

BOCCACCIO. Messer Francesco groans upon this and wipes his brow.

PETRARCA. Indeed I do.

Three [1] years ago my fancy and hopes were inflamed by what I believed to be the proximity of regeneration. Cola Rienzi might have established good and equitable laws: even the Papacy, from hatred of the barons, would have countenanced the enaction of them, hoping at some future time to pervert and subjugate the people as before. The vanity of this tribune, who corresponded with kings and emperors, and found them pliable and ductile, was not only the ruin of himself and of the government he had founded, but threw down, beyond the chance of retrieving it, the Roman name.

Let us converse no more about it. I did my duty; yet our failure afflicts me, and will afflict me until my death. Jubilees, and other such mummeries, are deemed abundant compensation for lost dignity, lost power and empire, lost freedom and independence. We who had any hand in raising up our country from her abject state, are looked on with jealousy by those wretches to whom cowardice and flight alone give the titles and rewards of loyalty; with sneers and scorn by those who share among themselves the emoluments of office; and, lest consolation be altogether wanting, with somewhat of well-meaning compassion, as weak misguided visionaries, by quiet good creatures who would have beslavered and adored us if we had succeeded.

The nation that loses her liberty is not aware of her misfortune at the time, any more than the patient is who receives a paralytic stroke. He who first tells either of them what has happened, is repulsed as a simpleton or a churl.

BOCCACCIO. When Messer Francesco talks about liberty, he talks loud. Let us walk away from the green,* into the cathedral, which the congregation is leaving.

[1] A misprint? But so in 1st ed.

* The cathedral of Arezzo stands on a green, in which are pleasant walks commanding an extensive view.—W. S. L.

CHAUCER, BOCCACCIO, AND PETRARCA

PETRARCA. Come, now, Giovanni, tell us some affecting story, suitable to the gloominess of the place.

BOCCACCIO. If Ser Geoffreddo felt in honest truth any pleasure at reading my *Decameron*, he owes me a tithe at least of the stories it contains : for I shall not be so courteous as to tell him that one of his invention is worth ten of mine, until I have had all his ten from him : if not now, another day.

CHAUCER. Let life be spared to me, and I will carry the tithe in triumph through my country, much as may be shed of the heavier and riper grain by the conveyance and the handling of it. And I will attempt to show Englishmen what Italians are ; how much deeper in thought, intenser in feeling, and richer in imagination, than ever formerly : and I will try whether we can not raise poetry under our fogs, and merriment among our marshes. We must at first throw some litter about it, which those who come after us may remove.

PETRARCA. Do not threaten, Ser Geoffreddo ! Englishmen act.

BOCCACCIO. Messer Francesco is grown melancholy at the spectre of the tribune. Relate to us some amusing tale, either of court or war.

CHAUCER. It would ill become me, signors, to refuse what I can offer : and truly I am loth to be silent, when a fair occasion is before me of adverting to those of my countrymen who fought in the battle of Cressy, as did one or two or more of the persons that are the subjects of my narrative.

BOCCACCIO. Enormous and horrible as was the slaughter of the French in that fight, and hateful as is war altogether to you and me, Francesco ! I do expect from the countenance of Ser Geoffreddo, that he will rather make us merry than sad.

CHAUCER. I hope I may, the story not wholly nor principally relating to the battle.

Sir Magnus Lucy is a knight of ample possessions, and of no obscure family, in the shire of Warwick, one of our inland provinces. He was left in his childhood under the guardianship of a mother, who loved him more fondly than discreetly. Beside which disadvantage, there was always wanting in his family the nerve or fluid, or whatever else it may be, on which the intellectual powers are nourished and put in motion. The good lady Joan would never let him enter the lists at jousts and tournaments, to which indeed he showed small inclination, nor would she encourage him to practise or

learn any martial exercise. He was excused from the wars under the plea that he was subject to epilepsy; somewhat of which fit or another had befallen him in his adolescence, from having eaten too freely of a cold swan, after dinner. To render him justice, he had given once an indication of courage. A farmer's son upon his estate, a few years younger than himself, had become a good player at quarter-staff, and was invited to Charlecote, the residence of the Lucys, to exhibit his address in this useful and manly sport. The lad was then about sixteen years old, or rather more; and another of the same parish, and about the same standing, was appointed his antagonist. The sight animated Sir Magnus; who, seeing the game over and both combatants out of breath, called out to Peter Crosby the conqueror, and declared his readiness to engage with him, on these conditions. First, that he should have a helmet on his head with a cushion over it, both of which he sent for ere he made the proposal, and both of which were already brought to him, the one from a buck's horn in the hall, the other from his mother's chair in the parlour: secondly, that his visor should be down: thirdly, that Peter should never aim at his body or arms: fourthly and lastly, for he would not be too particular, that, instead of a cudgel, he should use a bulrush, enwrapt in the under-coat he had taken off, lest anything venomous should be sticking to it, as his mother said there might be, from the spittle or spawn of toads, evets, water-snakes, and adders.

Peter scraped back his right foot, leaned forward, and laid his hooked fingers on his brow, not without scratching it—the multiform signification of humble compliance in our country. John Crosby, the father of Peter, was a merry jocose old man, not a little propense to the mischievous. He had about him a powder of a sternutatory quality, whether in preparation for some trick among his boon companions, or useful in the catching of chub and bream, as many suspected, is indifferent to my story. This powder he inserted in the head of the bulrush, which he pretended to soften and to cleanse by rubbing, while he instructed his lad in the use and application of it. Peter learned the lesson so well, and delivered it so skilfully, that at the very first blow the powder went into the aperture of the visor, and not only operated on the nostrils, but equally on the two spherical, horny, fish-like eyes above it. Sir Magnus wailed aloud, dropped his cudgel, tore with great effort (for it was well fastened)

the pillow from his helmet, and implored the attendants to embrace him, crying, "O Jesu! Jesu! I am in the agonies of death: receive my spirit!" John Crosby kicked the ancle of the farmer who sat next him on the turf, and whispered, "He must find it first."

The mischief was attributed to the light and downy particles of the bulrush, detached by the unlucky blow; and John, springing up when he had spoken the words, and seizing it from the hand of his son, laid it lustily about his shoulders, until it fell in dust on every side, crying, "Scape-grace! scape-grace! born to break thy father's heart in splinters! Is it thus thou beginnest thy service to so brave and generous a master? Out of my sight!"

Never was the trick divulged by the friends of Peter until after his death, which happened lately at the battle of Cressy. While Peter was fighting for his king and country, Sir Magnus resolved to display his wealth and splendour in his native land. He had heard of princes and other great men travelling in disguise, and under names not belonging to them. This is easy of imitation: he resolved to try it: although at first a qualm of conscience came over him on the part of the Christian name which his godfathers and godmothers had given him, but which however was so distinguishing, that he determined to lay it aside, first asking leave of three saints, paying three groats into the alms-box, saying twelve paternosters within the hour, and making the priest of the parish drunk at supper. He now gave it out by sound of horn, that he should leave Charlecote, and travel *incognito* through several parts of England. For this purpose he locked up the liveries of his valets, and borrowed for them from his tenants the dress of yeomanry. Three grooms rode forward in buff habiliments, with three led horses well caparisoned. Before noon he reached a small town called Henley in Arden, as his host at the inn-door told him, adding, when the knight dismounted, that there were scholars who had argued in his hearing, whether the name of Arden were derived from another forest so called in Germany, or from a puissant family which bore it, being earls of Warwick in the reign of Edward the Confessor. "It is the opinion of the abbot of Tewkesbury, and likewise of my very good master, him of Evesham," said the host, "that the Saxon earls brought over the name with them from their own country, and gave it to the wilder part of their dominions in this of ours."

"No such family now," cried the knight. "We have driven

them out, bag and baggage, long ago, being braver men than they were."

A thought however struck him, that the vacant name might cover and befit him in this expedition; and he ordered his servants to call him Sir Nigel de Arden.

Continuing his march northward, he protested that nothing short of the Trent (if indeed that river were not a fabulous one) should stop him; nay, by the rood, not even the Trent itself, if there were any bridge over it strong enough to bear a horse caparisoned, or any ford which he could see a herd of oxen, or a score of sheep fit for the butcher, pass across. Early on the second morning he was nigh upon twenty miles from home, at a hamlet we call Bromwicham, where be two or three furnaces, and sundry smiths, able to make a horse-shoe in time of need, allowing them drink and leisure. He commanded his steward to disburse unto the elder of them one penny of lawful coin, advising the cunning man to look well and soberly at his steed's hoofs, and at those of the other steeds in his company; which being done, and no repairs being necessary, Sir Magnus then proceeded to the vicinity of another hamlet called Sutton Colefield, in which country is a well-wooded and well-stocked chase, belonging to my dread master the duke of Lancaster, who often taketh his sport therein. Here, unhappily for the knight, were the keepers of the said chase hunting the red and fallow deer. The horse of the worshipful knight, having a great affection for dogs, and inspirited by the prancing and neighing of his fellow-creatures about him, sprang forward, and relaxed not any great matter of his mettle before he reached the next forest of Cannock, where the buck that was pursued pierced the thickets and escaped his enemies. In the village of Cannock was the knight, at his extremity, fain to look for other farriery than that which is exercised by the craft in Bromwicham, and upon other flesh than horseflesh, and about parts less horny than hoofs, however hardened be the same parts by untoward bumps and contusions. This farriery was applied by a skilful and discreet leech, while Sir Magnus opened his missal on his bed in the posture of devotion, and while a priest, who had been called in to comfort him, was looking for the penitential psalms of good king David, the only service (he assured Sir Magnus) that had any effect in the removal or alleviation of such sufferings.

When the host at Cannock heard the name of his guest,

" 'Sblood ! " cried he to his son, " ride over, Emanuel, to Longcroft, and inform the worshipful youths, Humphrey and Henry, that one of their kinsmen is come over from the other side of Warwickshire to visit them, and has lost his way in the forest through a love of sport."

On his road into Rugeley, Emanuel met them together, and told them his errand. They had heard the horn as they were riding out, had joined the hunt, and were now returning home. Indignant at first that anyone should take the name of their family, they went on asking more and more questions, and their anger abated as their curiosity increased. Having an abundance of good-humour and of joviality in their nature, they agreed to act courteously, and turn the adventure into glee and joyousness. So they went back with Emanuel to his father's at Cannock, and were received by the towns-people with much deference and respect. The attendants of Sir Magnus observed it, and were earnest to see in what manner the adventure would terminate.

" Go," said Humphrey, " and tell your master Sir Nigel that his kinsmen are come to pay their duty to him." The clergyman who had been reading the penitential psalms, and had afterward said mass, opened the chamber-door for them, and conducted them to Sir Magnus. They began their compliments by telling him that, although the house at Longcroft was unworthy of their kinsman's reception, in the absence of their father—when they were interrupted by the knight, who cried aloud in a clear quaver, " Young gentlemen ! I have no relative in these parts : I come from the very end of Warwickshire. Reverend sir priest ! I do protest and vow I have no cognisance of these two young gentlemen."

As he spoke the sweat hung upon his brow : the cause of which neither the brothers nor the priest could interpret ; but it really was lest they should have come to dine with him, and perhaps have more-over some retinue in the yard. Disclaimed so unceremoniously, Humphrey de Arden [1] opened a leathern purse, and carefully took out his father's letter. Whereat the alarm of Sir Magnus increased beyond measure, from the uncertainty of its contents, and from the certainty of being discovered as the usurper of a noble name. His terrors however were groundless : the letter was this.

" SON HUMPHREY, I grieve that the varlet who promised me those three strong geldings, and took monies thereupon, hath mortally dis-appointed me ; for verily we have hard work here, being one against

seven or eight *; and, if matters go on in this guise, I must e'en fight afoot ere it be long; they having killed among them my brave old Black Jack, who had often winnowed them with his broken wind, which was not broken till they broke it. The drunken fat rogue that now fails me, would rather hunt on Colefield or (if he dare come so near to you) on Cannock, than lead the three good steeds in a halter up Yoxall Lane. Whenever ye find him, stand within law with him, and use whit-leather rather than Needwood holly, which might provoke the judge; and take the three hale nags, coming hither with them yourselves, and paying him forthwith three angels, due unto him on the feast of Saint Barnabas and that other (Saint Jude, as I am now reminded), if ye have so many; if not, mortgage a meadow. And let this serve as a warrant from your loving father.† ††"

"What is that to me?" cried in agony Sir Magnus. The priest took the letter and shook his head. "Sir priest! you see how it stands with us," said the knight. "Do deliver me from the lion's den and from the young lions!"

"Friend!" said the priest gravely and sternly, "I know the mark of Sir Humphrey: and the handwriting is my own brother's, who, taking with him in his saddle-bag a goose-pie and twelve strings of black pudding for Sir Humphrey, left his cure at Tamworth but four months ago, and joined the army in France, in order to shrive the wounded. It is my duty to make known unto the sheriff whatever is irregular in my parish."

"O! for the love of Christ! say nothing to the sheriff! I will confess all," exclaimed the knight.

The attendants and many of the customers and countryfolks had listened at the door, which was indeed wide-open; and the priest being now confirmed in his suspicion by the knight's offer to "confess all," walked slowly through them, mounted his palfrey, and rode over to the sheriff at Penkridge. The two young gentlemen were delighted on seeing the consternation of Sir Magnus and his company, and encouraged by the familiarity of one among them, led him aside and said, "It will be well and happy for you if you persuade

* Such soon afterward was the disproportion of numbers at the battle of Cressy.—W. S. L.

† The mark of a knight, instead of his name, is not to be wondered at. Out of the thirty-six barons who subscribed the Magna Charta, three only signed with their names.—W. S. L.

the others of your party to return home speedily. The sheriff is a shrewd severe man, and will surely send every soul of you into Picardy, excepting such as he may gibbet on the common for an ensample."

"Masters!" replied the Warwickshire wag, "I will return among them and frighten them into the road: but you two brave lads shall have your horses, and your father his, together with such attendants as you little reckon on. Are ye for the wars?"

"We were going," said they gaily, "whenever we could raise enough monies from our father's tenantry; for he, much as he desires to have us with him, is very loth to be badly equipped; and would peradventure see us rather slain in battle, or (what he thinks worse) not in it at all, than villanously mounted."

"Will ye take me?" cried the gallant yeoman.

"Gladly," answered they both together.

Ralph Roebuck was the name of this brave youngster; and, with out another word, he ran among his fellows, and putting his hand above his ear, as our hunters are wont, shouted aloud, "Who 's for hanging this fine morning?" "Ralph!" chimed they together, somewhat languidly, "what dost mean?"

"I mean," whispered he slowly and distinctly to the nearest, "that the country will be up in half an hour; that the priest is gone for the sheriff; and that if he went for the devil he could fetch him. I never knew a priest at a fault, whatever he winded. Whosoe'er has a horse able to carry him is in luck. In my mind there will be some heels without a stirrup under them, before to-morrow, kick as they may to find it. I must not however be unfaithful to my master, for whom I have spoken a fair word, and worn a smiling face, in my perils and tribulations, with these stout young gallants. Each to his own bit and bridle: the three led chargers let no man touch, on his life. For the rest, I will be spokesman, in lack of a better. May we meet again in Charlecote, at least half the number we set out!"

Away they ran, saddled their horses, and rode off. Ralph, who had lately been put in the stocks by his master, for drinking a cup too much and for singing a song by no means dissuasive of incontinence, now for the first time began to think of it again, and expected a like repose after less baiting. Presently came up a swart, thin, fierce little man, with four others bearing arms. He, observing Ralph,

ordered him to "stand," in the king's name. Ralph had been standing, and stood, with his arms before him, hanging as if they were broken.

"Varlet and villain!" cried the under-sheriff, for such was the little man, "who art thou?"

"May it please your honour," answered he submissively, "my name is a real one and my own, such as it is."

"And what may it be, sirrah?"

"Ralph Roebuck."

"Egad!" cried the little man, starting at it, "that too sounds like a feigned one. Ye are all rogues and vagrants. Where are thy fellows?"

"I can answer only for myself, may it please your worship!" said Ralph.

"Where is thy leader, vagabond!" cried the magistrate, more and more indignant.

"God knows," answered Ralph, dolorously.

"Has he fled with the rest of his gang?"

"God grant he may," ejaculated Roebuck, "rather than hang upon the cursed tree."

The under-sheriff then ordered his people to hold Ralph in custody, and went and saluted the two De Ardens, who requested that clemency might be shown to everyone implicated in an offence so slight.

"We must consider of that," answered the under-sheriff. "Edward à Brocton, the priest of Cannock here, has given me this letter, which he swears is written by his brother William, priest of Tamworth, and marked by your worshipful father." The young men bowed. "Who is the rogue that defrauded him," resumed the under-sheriff, "in the three horses, to our lord the king's great detriment and discomfort?"

It was not for them, they replied, to incriminate anyone; nor indeed would they knowingly bring any man's blood on their heads if they could help it.

"The impostor in the house shall be examined," cried the little man, drawing his forefinger along his lips, for they were foamy. He went into the room, and found the knight in a shower of tears.

"Call my varlets! call my rogues!" cried Sir Magnus, wringing his hands and turning away his face.

"Rogues!" said the under-sheriff. "They are gone off, and in another county, or near upon it; else would I hang them all speedily, as I will thee, by God's pleasure. How many horses hast thou in the stable?"

"Sir! good sir! gentle sir! patience a little! let me think awhile!" said the knight.

"Ay, ay, ay! let thee think forsooth!" scornfully and canorously in well-sustained tenor hymned the son of Themis. "This paper hath told me."

"Worthy sir!" said the knight, "hear reason! Hear truth and righteousness and justification by faith! Hear a sinner in tribulation, in the shadow of death!"

"Faith! sirrah! thou art very near the substance, if there be any," interposed the under-sheriff.

"Nay, nay! hold! I beseech you! as I have a soul to be saved——"

"Pack it up then! pack it up! I will give it a lift when it is ready."

"O sir sheriff, sir sheriff! I am disposed to swear on the rood, I am not, and never was, Sir Nigel de Arden."

At these words the under-sheriff laughed bitterly, and said, "Nor I neither"; and, going out of the room, ordered a guard to stand at the door.

Henry then took him by the arm and said softly, "Gildart! do not be severe with the poor young man below. It is true he is in the secret, which he swears he will not betray if he dies for it; but he promises us the three horses without trial or suit or trouble or delay, and hopes you will allow his master to leave the kingdom in peace and safety under his conduct, promising to serve the king, together with us, faithfully in his wars."

"We could not do better," answered the under-sheriff, "if we were certain the fellow and his gang would not waylay and murder you on the road."

"Never fear!" cried Henry. "As we shall have other attendants, and are neither less strong nor (I trust) less courageous than he, we will venture, with your leave and permission."

This was given in writing. The under-sheriff ordered his guards to bring down the culprit, who came limping and very slow.

"Pity he can not feign and counterfeit a little better on the spur

of the occasion!" said the under-sheriff. "He well answers the description of fat and lazy: as for drunken, it shall not be to-day, on Cannock ale or Burton beer."

When the knight had descended the stairs, and saw Ralph Roebuck, he shrieked aloud with surprise and gladness, "O thou good and faithful servant! enter into the joy of thy lord!"

"God's blood!" cried Ralph. "I must enter then into a thing narrower than a weasel's or a wasp's hole. To what evil have you led us?"

"Now you can speak for me!" said the knight.

Ralph shook his head and sighed, "It will not do, master! I am resolved to keep my promise, which you commanded upon first setting out, though it may cost me limb or life. Master! one word in your ear."

"No whisperings! no connivances! no plans or projects of escape!" cried the guard. They helped Sir Magnus into his saddle with more than their hands and arms; which, instead of officiousness, he thought an indignity, though it might be the practice of those parts. The two De Ardens mounted two of the richly caparisoned steeds; the third was led by their servant, who went homeward with those also which they had ridden, for what was necessary, being ordered to rejoin them at Lichfield. Ralph Roebuck sat alert on his own sorrel palfrey, a quick and active one, with open transparent nostrils. He would, as became him, have kept behind his master, if the knight had not called him to his side, complaining that the length and roughness of the roads had shaken his saddle so as to make it uneven and uneasy. Many and pressing were the offers of Ralph to set it right: Sir Magnus shook his head and answered that "man is born to suffering as the sparks fly upward."

"I could wish, sir," said Ralph, "if it did not interfere with higher dispensations——"

"The very word! Ralph! the very word! thou rememberest it! I could not bring it nicely to mind. Several Sundays have passed since we heard it. Well! what couldst thou wish?"

"That your worship had under you at this juncture the cushion of our late good lady Joan, which might serve you now somewhat better than it did at the battle of the bulrush. We all serve best in our places."

"By our lady! Ralph! I never saw a man so much improved by

his travels as thou art. What shall we both be ere we reach home again?"

Ralph persuaded his master how much better it were that his worship did not return too speedily among the cravens and recreants who had deserted him, and who probably would be pursued; and then what a shame and scandal it would be, if such a powerful knight as Sir Magnus should see them dragged from his own hall, and from under his own eyes to prison. If by any means it could be contrived to prolong the journey a few days, it would be a blessing; and the De Ardens, it might be hoped, would say nothing of the matter to the sheriff. Sir Magnus felt that his importance would be lowered by the seizure of his servants, in his presence, and under his roof; and he had other reasons for wishing to ride leisurely, in which his more active companions little participated. On their urging him to push forward, he complained that his horse had been neglected, and had neither tasted oat nor bean, nor even sweet meadow-hay, at Cannock. His company expressed the utmost solicitude that this neglect should be promptly remedied, and grieving that the next stage was still several miles distant, offered, and at the same time exerted, their best services, in bringing the hungry and loitering steed to a trot. Sir Magnus now had his shrewd suspicions, he said, that the saddle had been ill looked to, and doubted whether a nail from behind might not somehow have dropped lower. When he would have cleared up his doubts by the agency of his hand, again the whip, applied to his flinching steed, disturbed the elucidation; and his knuckles, instead of solving the knotty point, only added to its nodosity. At last he cried, "Roebuck! Roebuck! gently, softly! If we go on at this rate, in another half-hour I shall be black and bloody, as ever rook was that dropped ill-fledged from the rookery."

"The Lord hath well speeded our flight," said Ralph relenting: "he hath delivered us from our enemies. What miles and miles have we travelled, to all appearance in a few hours!"

"Not many hours indeed," answered the knight, still pondering. "What is yon red spire?" added he.

"The tower of Babel," replied Ralph composedly.

"I can not well think it," muttered Sir Magnus in suspense. "They would never have dared to rebuild it, after God's anger thereupon."

It was the spire of Lichfield cathedral.

When they entered the city they found there some hundreds of French prisoners, taken in the late skirmishes, who were chattering and laughing and boasting of their invincibility. Their sun-burnt faces, their meagre bodies, their loud cries, and the violence our surly countrymen expressed at not being understood by them, although as natives of Lichfield they spoke such good English, removed in part the doubts of Sir Magnus, even before he heard our host cry, "By God! a very Babel!" Later in the evening came some Welshmen, having passed through Shropshire and Cheshire with mountain sheep, for the fair the next morning. These too were unintelligible in their language, and different from the others. They quarrelled with the French for mocking them, as they thought. Sir Magnus expressed his wonder that an Englishman, which the host was, should be found in such a far country, among the heathen; albeit some of them spoke English, not being able for their hearts and souls to do otherwise, since all the languages in the world were spoken there as a judgment on the ungodly. He confessed he had always thought Babel was in another place, though he could not put his finger upon it exactly. Nothing, he added, so clearly proved the real fact, as that the sheep themselves were misbegotten and black-faced, and several of them altogether tawny, like a Moor's head he had seen, he told them, in the chancel-window of Saint Mary's at Warwick. "Which reminds me," said the pious knight, "that the hour of Angelus must be at hand, and, beside the usual service, I have several forms of thanksgiving to run through before I break bread again."

It was allowed him to go alone upstairs for his devotions, in which, ye will have observed, he was very regular. Meanwhile the landlord and his two daughters, two buxom wenches, were admitted into the secret; and it was agreed that at supper all should speak a jargon, by degrees more and more confused, and that at last every imaginable mistake should be made, in executing the orders of the company. The girls entered heartily into the device, and the rosy-faced father gave them hints and directions while the supper was being cooked. Sir Magnus came down, after a time, covered with sweat. He protested that the heat of the climate in these countries was intolerable, particularly in his bedroom: that indeed he had felt it before, in the open air, but only on certain portions of the body, which certain stars have an influence upon, and not at all in the face.

The oven had been heated just under the knight's bed, in order to supply loaves for the farmers and drovers the following day.

Supper was now served: bread however was wanting. The knight desired one of the young women to give him some. She looked at him in astonishment, shrank back, blushed, and hid her face in her apron. The father came forward furiously, and said many words, or rather uttered many sounds, which Sir Magnus could not understand. He requested his attendant Ralph to explain. Ralph made a few attempts at English, and, failing in it, spoke very fluently another tongue. The father and his daughters stared one at another, and brought a bucket of hot water, with a square of soap; then a goose's wing; then a sack of grey peas; then a blackbird in a cage; then a mustard-pot; then a handful of brown paper; then a pair of white rabbits, hanging by the ears. Sir Magnus now addressed the other girl. She appeared more willing to comply, and, making a sign at her father, whose back was turned in his anxiety to find what was called for, as if she would be kinder still when he was out of the way, laid her arm across the neck of the knight, and withdrew it hesitatingly and timidly. At this instant a great dog entered, allured by the smell of the meat. The knight's lips quivered, and the first accents he uttered audibly and distinctly were—"Seeking whom he may devour." Then falling on his knees he cried aloud, "O Lord! thy mercies are manifold! I am a sinner."

The girl trembled from head to foot, ready to burst with the laughter she was suppressing, and kissed her father, and appeared to implore his pardon. He pushed her back and cried, "Away! I saw thee! I saw thee with these very eyes!" clenching his fist and striking his brow franticly. "I saw thy shadow upon the wall. No wickedness is hidden."

"The hand-writing! the hand-writing! that was upon the wall too! perhaps upon this very one," exclaimed the conscience-stricken and aghast Sir Magnus. He fell on his knees, and praised the Lord for allowing to the host again the use of his mother-tongue; for the salvation of him a sinner; if indeed it were not the Lord himself who spake by the lips of his servant in the words, "No wickedness is hidden." After a prayer, he protested that, although indeed his heart was corrupt, as all hearts were, the devil had failed to inflame him universally. Not one knew what he said. Humphrey laughed

and nodded assent; Henry offered him baked apples; Ralph brushed his doublet-sleeve.

Before it was light in the morning, the horses were at the door: nobody appeared: no money had been paid or demanded: nevertheless it seemed an inn. They mounted; they mused; they feared to meet each other's eyes: at last Ralph addressed one of the De Ardens in a low voice, but so as to be heard by his master. The two brothers tried each a monosyllable: Ralph shook his head, and they looked despondently. Attempts were renewed at intervals for several miles; when suddenly a distant bell was heard, probably from the cathedral, and Humphrey cried, "Matins! matins!" At this moment all spoke English perfectly, and the knight uttered many fervent ejaculations. The others related their sufferings and visions; and when they had ended, Sir Magnus said, he seemed to hear throughout the night the roaring of a fiery furnace, for all the world like King Nebuchadnezzar's; only that sinful bodies, and not righteous ones, were moved and shoved backward and forward in it, until their bones grated like iron, and until his own teeth chattered so in his head he could hear them no longer.

His conductor was careful to avoid the county of Warwick, lest anyone should recognise the knight, little as was the chance of it; for he never had been further from home than at Warwick, and there but twice, the distance being five good miles. On his way toward the coast, he wondered to find the stars so very like those at Charlecote; and some of them seemed to know him and wink at him. He thought indeed here were a good many more of them awake and stirring; because he had been longer out of doors than he had ever been before, at night. Slowly as he would have travelled, if he had been allowed his own way, on the sixth morning from his adventure at Cannock he had come within sight of the coast. To his questions no other answer was returned, than that the times were unquiet; that the roads were infested with robbers; and that the orders of a sheriff were as a king's. In the afternoon, the travellers descended the narrow holloway that leads into the seaport town of Hastings. Ralph pointed at some sailors who were stepping into a boat, and cried, "Master! what do you think of these?"

"I think, Roebuck," answered he, after pondering some moments, "that they are like unto those who go down into the great waters."

The De Ardens were conveying their stores and horses aboard, to

lose no time, when Ralph whispered in the ear of the knight, "Sir Knight! do not, for the love of Christ! do not venture with those two dare-devils any further. Let us take only a small boat, just large enough to enter the Avon. There is a short cut hereabout, if we could find it. For six pieces of gold we may hire as many sailors to hazard their liberties and lives for us, and see us safe at home again."

"Six[1] pieces of gold!" repeated Sir Magnus very slowly and distinctly: "six pieces of gold, in these hard times, go well-nigh to purchase an acre of pasture-land."

"True," replied Roebuck, "with a hundred of sand and a thousand of sea thrown in, as hoof and shank to a buttock of beef."

"Indeed!" interjected Sir Magnus. "Why, then, would not it be better to look out for some such investment of said monies, and to get the indentures fairly engrossed forthwith?"

"Investment! indentures!" cried Ralph. "Master! it is well for those who can carry by land and sea such fine learned words about with 'em, which are enough to show a man's gentility all the world over."

It is uncertain whether Sir Magnus heard him, for he continued to utter and repeat the substance of his reflections.

"What a quantity of fishes there must be in a thousand acres of deep salt water, being well looked to! Rats and otters might sneeze their hearts out before they could catch a fin, with the brine and foam bobbing up everlastingly and buffeting their whiskers: and the poachers must buy lime-kilns, and forests, and mines of pure poison, if they would make the fish drunk at the bottom. Furthermore, there never could be a lack of sand at Charlecote these twenty years to come, for kitchen or scullery or walk before the hall-windows, or repairs of cow-house or dove-cot: and many a cart-load would be lying in store for sale."

"There is great foresight and cleverness in all this," said Ralph: "and if your worship had only six gold pieces in the world, no time ought to be lost in running with 'em seaward. But to my foolishness, three for life and three for liberty seem reasonable enough. Pirates, and even fair-fighting enemies, such as those gentlemen over the way, demand for a knight's ransom as many hundreds."

The knight drew back and hesitated.

[1] From "Six" to "hundreds" added in 2nd ed.

"Well,[1] Sir!" said Ralph, "the business is none of mine. I have been let go ere now for an old song when I had angered my man: here I have angered nobody: I am safe anywhere, and welcome in most places."

"I am fain to learn that old song of his," said the knight inaudibly.

Roebuck continued, "I have no hall with antlers in it; I would rather eat a sucking pig than a swan, and a griskin than a heron; and I can do either with good-will about noon any day in seven, bating Friday, and without mounting up three long steps that run across the room, or resting my feet on a dainty mat of rushes. A good blazing kitchen fire is enough for me.[2] I care neither for bucks nor partridges. As for spiced ale at christenings and weddings, I may catch a draught of it when it passes. Sack I have heard of: poor tipple, I doubt, that wants sweetening. But a horn of home-brewed beer, frothing leisurely, and humming lowly its contented tune, is suitable to my taste and condition; and I envy not the great and glorious who have a goose with a capon in his belly on the table, or [3] even a peacock, his head as good as alive, and the proudest of his feathers to crown him."

The knight answered, "Somehow I do not like to part with my gold; I never saw any in coinage till last Easter *; and it seems so fresh and sunshiny and pleasant, I would keep it to look at in damp weather. Pay the varlets in groats."

"Sir Knight!" replied Ralph, "do not let them see your store of groats, which are very handy, and sundry of these likewise are quite new."

"Nobody would pay away new groats that could help it," sighed Sir Magnus.

"The gold must go, and make room for more," said Roebuck. The knight answered nothing; but turning round, lest anybody should notice his capacious and well-stored scrip, he drew forth the six pieces, and, after a doubt and a trial with his thumb and finger, whether by reason of their roughness two peradventure might not

[1] From "Well" to "rushes" added in 2nd ed.

[2] 1st ed. reads: "'me,' said Ralph. 'I care,'" etc.

[3] From "or" to "him" added in 2nd ed.

* The first gold coined in England came out rather more than a year before this time, that is in 1344; the quantity was small, and probably the circulation not rapid nor extensive.—W. S. L.

stick together and make seven, he placed them in the palm of Roebuck, who took them with equal silence and less uncertainty. Great contentment was manifested by the worshipful knight that the two De Ardens had left him; and he ate a good dinner, and drank a glass of Rhenish, which he said was "pure sour"; and presently was anxious to go aboard the boat, if it was ready Ralph conducted him to it and helped him in. The rowers for some time played their parts lustily, and then hoisted sail. Roebuck asked the oldest of them whether the wind was fair. "Passably," said he; "but unless we look sharp we may be carried into the Low Countries."

"I do not see anywhere that short cut, nor that brook which runs into the Avon," said Sir Magnus. "As for the Low Countries, no fear of them: the water rises before us, and we mount higher and higher every moment, insomuch that I begin to feel as if I were going up in a swing, like that between the elms."

Presently old Ocean exacted from him his tribute, which the powerfullest not of knights only and barons, but of princes and kings must pay him in his own dominions, bending their heads and stretching out their arms and acknowledging his supremacy with tears and groans. He now fancied he had been poisoned on shore; and was confirmed in his belief, when Roebuck hummed a tune without any words to it, prodigal and profuse as he was of them on ordinary occasions; and when neither he nor any of the sailors would bring him such a trifle as water-gruel sweetened with clary wine, or camomile flowers picked with the dew upon them and simmered in fair spring water and in an earthen pan, or viper-broth with a spoonful of Venice-treacle in it, stirred with the tusk of a wild boar in the first quarter of the moon: the only things he asked them for. Soon however his pains abated; yet he complained that his eyesight was so affected, he seemed to see nothing but greenish water, like leek-porridge, albeit by his reckoning they must now be near the brook.

"Methinks," said he, "we are running after that great white ship yonder."

"Methinks so too," answered Ralph; crying, "How is this?" with apparent anger, to the sailors.

"It cannot be otherwise," said one of them: "the boat is the brig's own daughter: what mortal can keep them asunder? You

might as well hope to hold tight by your teeth a two months' calf from its dam."

"Why didst not thou see to that, Ralph?" cried the knight in the bitterness of his soul. "Always rash and imprudent!"

Roebuck attempted to console his master with the display of the honours that would be shown him aboard the brig, when his quality should be discovered. Then, taking advantage of a shoal of porpoises, that rolled and darted in every direction round the boat, he showed them to Sir Magnus, who turned pale at seeing them so near him. "Never be frightened at a parcel of bots!" cried Roebuck.

"Bots! what, those vast creatures?"

"Ay, surely," said one of the sailors. "The sea-horses void them by millions in a moment: you may sometimes see a thousand of them sticking on a single hair of their tails."

"Do those horses come within sight then?" said Sir Magnus tremulously.

"Only when they are itchy," answered the mariner; "and then they contrive to slip between a boat and a brig, and crack a couple or three at a time of these troublesome little insects."

Sir Magnus said something to himself about the wonders of the great deep, and praised God for having kept hitherto such a breed of bots out of his stables. He began to see clearly how fitted everything is to the place it occupies; and how certainly these creatures were created to be killed between brigs and boats.

Meditations must have their end, though they reach to Heaven.

Great as had been the consternation of Sir Magnus at the sight of the porpoises, and at the probability that a hair of some stray marine horse, covered over with them, might lie between him and the river; greater still was it, if possible, at approaching the brig, and discerning the two De Ardens. "What can they want with me?" cried he. "I am resolved not to go home with them."

Roebuck raised his spirits, by swearing that nothing of the kind should happen, while he had a drop of blood in his veins. "Hark! Sir Knight!" said he. "Observe how the two young gentlemen are behaving."

Gaily indeed did they accost him, and imperiously cried they to the crew, "Make way for Sir Magnus Lucy."

"Behold, sir, your glorious name hath already manifested itself," said Ralph.

A rope-ladder was let down; and the brothers knelt, and inclined their bodies, and offered their hands to aid him in mounting. "Here are honours paid to my master!" said Roebuck exultingly. Sir Magnus himself was highly gratified with his reception, and resolved to defer his interrogatory on the course they seemed to be taking. He was startled at dinner-time when the captain with strange familiarity entitled him "Sir Mag." The following words were even more offensive; for when the ship rolled somewhat, though moderately, the trencher of Sir Magnus fell into his lap; and the captain cried, "Nay, nay, Sir Mag! as much into gullet as gullet will hold, but clap nothing below the girdle." He protested he had no design to secret anything. The sailors played and punned, as low men are wont, on his family name: and on his asking what the fellows meant by their impudence, a scholar from Oxford, of whom he inquired it, one who liked the logic of princes better than that of pedants, told him they wished to express by their words and gestures that he was, in the phrase of Horace, *ad unguem factus*.

"I do not approve of any phrases," answered he, somewhat proudly, "and pray, sir, tell them so."

"Sir!" said Roebuck in his ear, "although you may be somewhat disappointed in the measure of respect paid to you aboard, you will be compensated on landing."

Sir Magnus thought hereby that his tenants would surely bring him pullets and chines. As they approached the coast, "I told you, sir!" exclaimed he. "Look at the bonfire on the very edge of the sands! they could not make it nearer you." A fire was blazing, and there were loud *huzzas* as the ship entered the port.

"I would still be incog. if possible," said Sir Magnus, hollowing his cheeks and voice, and recovering to himself a great part of his own estimation. "Give the good men this money; and tell them in future not to burn a serviceable boat for me, in want of brushwood. I will send them a cart-load of it another time, on due application."

The people were caulking a fishing-smack: they took the money, hooted at Sir Magnus, and turned again to their labour.

After the service of the day, the king of England was always pleased to watch the ships coming over, to observe the soldiers debarking, and to learn the names of the knights and esquires who successively crossed the channel. He happened to be riding at no

great distance; and ordered one of his attendants to go and bring him information of the ship and her passengers, particularly as he had seen some stout horses put ashore. This knight was an intimate friend of De Arden the father, and laughed heartily at the adventure, as related by Humphrey. He repeated it to the king, word for word, as nearly as he could. "Marry!" said the king. "Three fat horses, with a bean-field (I warrant) in each, are but an inadequate price for such a name. I doubt whether we have another among us that was in any degree noble before the Norman conquest. We ourselves might have afforded three decent ones, in recompense for the dominion and property of nearly one whole county, and that county the fairest in England. Let the boys make the knight show his prowess, as some of his family have done. I observe they ride well, and have the prudence to exercise their horses on their first debarking, lest they grow stiff and lose their appetite. Tell them I shall be glad to hear of them, and then to see them."

Sir Magnus, the moment he set foot on shore, was welcomed to land by Roebuck. "No, no! rogue Ralph!" said he, nodding. "I know the Avon when I see it. Here we are—— None of your mummery, good people," cried he, somewhat angrily, when several ragged French, men, women, and children, asked him for charity. "We will have no Babel here, by God's blessing."

Soon came forward two young knights, and told him it was the king's pleasure he should pitch his tent above *Eu*, on the right of this same river *Brete*.

"Youngsters!" cried he arrogantly, "I shall pitch nothing; neither tent (whatever it may be) nor quoit nor bar. Know ye, I am Sir Magnus Lucy of Charlecote."

The young knights, unceremoniously as he had treated them, bowed profoundly and said they bore the king's command, leaving the execution of it to his discretion.

"The king's," repeated he. "What have I done? Has that skipping squirrel of an under-sheriff been at the king's ear about me?"

They could not understand him; and, telling him that it would be unbecoming in them to investigate his secrets, made again their obeisance, and left him. He then turned toward Ralph; the polar star in every ambiguity of his courses.

"Honoured master, Sir Magnus!" answered Ralph, "let no

strife be between us, nor ill blood, that alway maketh ill counsels boil uppermost in the pot."

"Roebuck!" said the knight, surveying him with silent admiration, "now speakest thou soundly and calmly; for thou hast taken time in the delivery thereof, and communed with thyself, before thou didst trust the least trustworthy of thy members. But I do surmise from thy manner, and from the thing spoken, that thou hast somewhat within thee which thou wouldst utter yet."

"Worshipful sir!" subjoined Ralph, "although I do not boast of my services, as who would? yet, truth is truth; I have saved your noble neck from the gallows; forasmuch as you took a name, worshipful sir! which neither king nor father ever gave you, and which belongeth to others rightfully. Now if both the name and the horses had been found at once upon you, a miracle only could have saved you from that bloody-minded under-sheriff. Providential was it for you, sir knight, that those two young gentlemen, whether in mercy they counterfeited the letter——"

"No, no, no! the priest's own brother wrote it: the priest deposed to the handwriting."

"Then," said Ralph calmly, lifting up the palms of his hands toward Sir Magnus, "let us praise the Lord!"

"Hei-day? Ralph! why! art even thou grown devout? Verily this is a great mercy; a great deliverance. I doubt whether the best part of it (praised be the Lord nevertheless!) be not rather for thee, than for such a sinner as I am. For thou hast lost no horse; and yet art touched as if thou hadst lost a stud: thou hast not suffered in the flesh; and yet thy spirit is very contrite."

"Master!" said Ralph, "only one thing is quite plain to me; which is, that Almighty God decrees we should render our best services to our country. Your three horses followed you for idle pomp; vanity prompted you to appear what you are not."

"Very wrong, Ralph!"

"And yet, Sir Magnus, if you had not committed this action, which in your pious and reasonable humility you call very wrong, perhaps three gallant youths (for Sir Magnus Lucy by God's grace shall be the third) had remained at home in that sad idleness, which leads to an unprivileged and tongue-tied old-age. We are now in France——"

"Ralph! Ralph!" said Sir Magnus, "be serious still. Faith!

I can hardly tell when thou art and when thou art not, being so unsteady a creature."

"Sir Magnus, I repeat it, we are now in Normandy or Picardy, I know not rightly which, where the king also is, and where it would be unseemly if any English knight were not. The eyes of England and of France are fixed upon us. Here we must all obey, the lofty as well as the humble."

"Obey? ay, to be sure, Ralph! Thou wilt obey me: thou art not great enough to obey the king: therefore set not thy heart upon it."

Ralph smiled and replied, "I offered my service to the young De Ardens, which they graciously accepted. As however they have their own servants with 'em, if you, my honoured master, can trust me, who have more than once deceived you, but never to your injury, I will with their permission continue to serve you, and that right faithfully. Whatever is wanting to the dignity of your appearance is readily purchased in this country, from the many traffickers who follow the camp, and from the great abundance of Normandy. So numerous too are the servants who have lost their masters, you may find as many as your rank requires, or your fortune can maintain. There are handier men among them than I am; and I do not ask of you any place of trust above my betters. Such as I am, either take me, Sir Magnus, or leave me with the two brave lads."

"Ralph!" answered the knight, "I can not do without thee; since I am here; as it seems I am!" and he sighed. "About those servants that have lost their masters—I wish thou couldst have held thy peace. I would not fain have such unlucky varlets. But some of these masters, let us hope, may be found. Thou dost not mean they are dead; that is, killed!"

"Missing," said Ralph, consolatorily.

"I thought so: I corrected thee at the time. Now my three horses, the king being here, if thou speakest truth, I can have them up by certiorari at his Bench."

"They would be apt to leap it, I trow," replied Ralph, "with such riders upon their backs. Master, be easy about them!"

"Ismael is very powerful: he could carry me anywhere in reason," said Sir Magnus.

"Do not let the story get wind," answered his counsellor, "lest we never hear the end of it. I promise you, my worthy master, you shall have Ismael again after the wars."

"He will have longer teeth, and fewer marks in his mouth, before that time," said sorrowfully Sir Magnus.

"No bridle can hold him, when he is wilful," replied Ralph; "and although peradventure he might carry your Worship clean through the enemy, once or twice, yet Ismael is not the horse to be pricked and goaded by pikes and arrows, without rearing and plunging, and kicking off helmets by the dozen, nine ells from the ground. Let those Staffordshire lads break him in and bring him home."

"Tell them so! tell them so!" said Sir Magnus, rubbing his hands. "And find me one very strong and fleet, and very tractable, and that will do anything rather than plunge and rear at being pricked; if such bloody times should ever come over again in the world: for, as I never yet gave any man cause to mock at me, I will do my utmost to make all reverent of me, now I am near the king." Thus he spoke, being at last well aware that he was indeed in France; although he was yet perplexed in spirit in regard to his having been at Babel.

However, some time afterward he was likewise cured of this scepticism; as by degrees men will be on such points, if they seek the truth in humility of spirit. Conversing one day with Roebuck on past occurrences, he said, after a pause, "Ralph! I have confessed unto thee many things, as thou likewise hast confessed many unto me; the which manner of living and communing was very pleasant to the gentle saints Paul and Timothy. And now I do indeed own that I have seen men in these parts beyond sea, and doubt not that there be likewise such in others, who in sundry matters have more of worldly knowledge than I have—knowledge I speak of, not of understanding. In the vanity of my heart, having at that time seen little, I did imagine and surmise that Babel lay wider of us; albeit I could not upon oath or upon honour say where or whereabout. It pleased the Lord to enlighten me by signs and tokens, and not to leave me for the scorn of the heathen and the derision of the ungodly. Had I minded his word somewhat more, when in my self-sufficiency I thought I had minded little else and knew it off-hand, I should have remembered that we pray every sabbath for the peace of Jerusalem, and of Sion, and of Israel; meaning thereby (as the priest admonishes the simpler of the congregation) our own country, albeit other names have been given in these latter days to divers parts thereof. By the

same token I might have apprehended that Babel lay at no vast distance."

Roebuck listened demurely, smacking his lips at intervals like a carp out of pond, and looking grave and edified. Tired however with this geographical discursion, burred and briared and braked with homilies, he reminded his master that no time was to be lost in looking for a gallant steed, worthy to bear a knight of distinction. "My father," said he, "made a song for himself, in readiness at fair or market, when he had a sorry jade to dispose of:—

'Who sells a good nag
On his legs may fag
  Until his heart be weary.
Who buys a good nag,
And hath groats in his bag,
  May ride the world over full cheery.'"

"Comfortable thoughts, both of 'em!" said Sir Magnus. "I never sold my nags: and I have groats enow—if nobody do touch the same. Not knowing well the farms about this country, and the day being more windy than I could wish it, and proposing still to remain for a while *incognito*, and being somewhat soiled in my apparel by the accidents of the voyage, and furthermore my eyes having been strained thereby a slight matter, it would please me, Roebuck, if thou wentest in search of the charger: the troublesome part of looking at his quarters, and handling him, and disbursing the monies, I myself may, by God's providence, bring unto good issue."

Ralph accepted the commission, and performed it faithfully and amply. He returned with two powerful chargers, magnificently caparisoned, and told his master that he would grieve to the day of his death if he let either of them slip through his fingers. Sir Magnus first asked the prices, and then the names of them. He was informed that one was called Rufus, and the other Beauclerc, after two great English kings. Inquiring of Ralph the history of these English kings, and whether he had ever heard of them, and on the confession of Ralph in the negative, he was vexed and discontented, and told Ralph he knew nothing. The owner of the horses was very fluent in the history of the two princes; which nearly lost him his customer; for the knight shook his head, saying he should be sorry to mount a beast of such an unlucky name as Rufus: above all, in a country where arrows were so rife. As for Beauclerc, he was unexceptionable.

"A horse indeed!" cried Roebuck; "in my mind, sir! Ismael is not fit to hold a candle to him."

"I would not say so much as that," gravely and majestically replied the knight: "but this Beauclerc has his points, Roebuck." Sir Magnus purchased the two horses, and acquired into the bargain the two pages of history appertaining to their names; which, proud as he was of displaying them on all occasions, he managed less dexterously. Before long he heard on every side the most exalted praises of Humphrey and Henry; and although he was by no means invidious, he attributed a large portion of the merit to Ismael, and appealed to Roebuck whether he did not once hear him say that Jacob too would show himself one day or other. Stimulated by the glory his horses had acquired, horses bred upon his own land, and by the notice they had attracted from our invincible Edward, under two mere striplings of half his weight, he himself within a week or fortnight was changed in character. Sloth and inactivity were no longer endurable to him. He exercised his chargers and himself in every practice necessary to the military career; and at last being presented to the king, Edward said to him that, albeit not being at Westminster, nor having his chancellor at hand, he could not legally enforce the payment of the three angels, still due (he understood) as part of the purchase-money of sundry chargers, nevertheless he would oblige the gallant knight who bought them to present him on due occasion a pair of spurs for his acquittance.

The ceremony was not performed in the presence of the king, whose affairs required him elsewhere, but in the presence of his glorious son, after the battle of Cressy. Here Sir Magnus was surrounded, and perhaps would have fallen, being still inexpert in the management of his arms, when suddenly a young soldier, covered with blood, rushed between him and his antagonist, whom he levelled with his battle-axe, and fell exhausted. Sir Magnus had received many bruises through his armour, and noticed but little the event; many similar ones, or nearly so, having occurred in the course of the engagement. Soon however that quarter of the field began to show its herbage again in larger spaces; and at the distant sound of the French trumpets, which was shrill, fitful, and tuneless, the broken ranks of the enemy near him, waved, like a tattered banner in the wind, and melted, and disappeared. Ralph had fought resolutely at his side, and, though wounded, was little hurt. The knight called

him aloud: at his voice not only Ralph came forward, but the soldier, who had preserved his life, rolled round toward him. 'Disfigured as he was with blood and bruises, Ralph knew him again: it was Peter Crosby of the bulrush. Sir Magnus did not find immediately the words he wanted to accost him: and indeed though he had become much braver, he had not grown much more courteous, much more generous, or much more humane. He took him however by the hand, thanked him for having saved his life, and hoped to assist in doing him the same good turn.

Roebuck in the meantime washed the several wounds of his former friend and playmate, from a cow's horn containing wine; of which, as he had reserved it only against thirst in battle, few drops were left. Gashes opened from under the gore; which made him wish that he had left it untouched; and he drew in his breath, as if he felt all the pain he awakened.

"Well meant, Ralph! but prythee give over!" said Crosby patiently. "These singings in my head are no merry-makings."

"Master!—if you are there—I would liefer have lain in Hampton churchyard among the skittles, or as near them as might be, so as not to spoil the sport: and methinks had it been a score or two of years later, it were none the worse. Howsoever, God's will be done! Greater folks have been eaten here by the dogs. Welladay, and what harm? Dogs at any time are better beasts than worms, and should be served first. They love us, and watch us, and help us while we are living: the others don't mind us while we are good for anything. There are chaps, too, and feeding in clover, who think much as they do upon that matter.

"Give me thy hand, Ralph! Tell my father I have done my best. If thou findest a slash or two athwart my back and loins, swear to him, as thou safely mayest do on all the gospels, and on any bone of any martyr, that they closed upon me and gave them when I was cutting my way through—aweary with what had been done already—to lend my last service—to our worthy master."

Now, Messer Francesco, I may call upon you, having seen you long since throw aside your gravity, and at last spring up alert, as though you would mount for Picardy.

Petrarca. A right indeed have you acquired to call upon me, Ser Geoffreddo; but you must accept from me the produce of our country. Brave men appear among us every age almost; yet all of

them are apt to look to themselves; none will hazard his life for another; none will trust his best friend. Such is our breed; such it always was. In affairs of love alone have we as great a variety as you have, and perhaps a greater. I am by nature very forgetful of light occurrences, even of those which much amused me at the time; and if your greyhound, Messer Geoffreddo, had not been laying his muzzle between my knees, urging my attention, shivering at the cold of this unmatted marble, and treading upon my foot in preference, I doubt whether you would ever have heard from me the story I shall now relate to you.

It occurred the year before I left Avignon; the inhabitants of which city, Messer Giovanni will certify, are more beautiful than any others in France.

Boccaccio. I have learnt it from report, and believe it readily: so many Italians have resided there so long, and the very flower of Italy: amorous poets, stout abbots, indolent priests, high-fed cardinals, handsome pages, gigantic halberdiers, and crossbow-men for ever at the mark.

Petrarca. Pish! pish! let me find my way through 'em, and come to the couple I have before my eyes, and the spaniel that was the prime mover in the business.

Tenerin de Gisors knew few things in the world; and, if he had known all therein, he would have found nothing so valuable, in his own estimation, as himself. The ladies paid much court to him, and never seemed so happy as in his presence: this disquieted him.

Boccaccio. How the deuce! he must have been a saint then: which accords but little with his vanity.

Petrarca. You might mistake there, Giovanni! The observation does not hold good in all cases, I can assure you.

Boccaccio. Well, go on with him.

Petrarca. I do think, Giovanni, you tell a story a great deal more naturally; but I will say plainly what my own eyes have remarked, and will let the peculiarities of men appear as they strike me, whether they are in symmetry with our notions of character, or not.

Chaucer. The man of genius may do this: no other will attempt it. He will discover the symmetry, the relations, and the dependencies, of the whole: he will square the strange problematic circle of the human heart.

Pardon my interruption; and indulge us with the tale of Tenerin.

PETRARCA. He was disquieted, I repeat, by the gaiety and familiarity of the young women, who, truly to speak, betray at Avignon no rusticity of reserve. Educated in a house where music and poetry were cultivated, he had been hearing from his earliest days the ditties of broken hearts and desperation: and never had he observed that these invariably were sung under leering eyes, with smiles that turned every word upside-down, and were followed by the clinking of glasses, a hearty supper, and *what not!* Beside,[1] he was very handsome; men of this sort, although there are exceptions, are usually cold toward the women; and he was more displeased that they should share the admiration which he thought due to himself exclusively, than pleased at receiving the larger part of theirs.

At Avignon, as with us, certain houses entertain certain parties. It is thought unpolite and inconstant ever to go from one into another, I do not mean in the same evening, but in your lifetime; and only the religious can do it without reproach. As bees carry and deposit the fecundating dust of certain plants, so friars and priests the exhilarating tales of beauty, and the hardly less exhilarating of frailty, covering it deeply with pity, and praising the mercy of the Lord in permitting it for an admonition to others.

There are two sisters in our city (I forgot myself in calling Avignon so), of whom among friends I may speak freely, and may even name them: Cyrilla de la Haye, and Egidia. Cyrilla, the younger, is said to be extremely beautiful: I never saw her, and few beside the family have seen her lately. She is spoken of among her female friends as very lively, very modest, fond of reading and of music: added to which advantages, she is heiress to her uncle the Bishop of Carpentras, now invested with the purple. For her fortune, and for the care bestowed on her education, she is indebted to her sister, who, having deceived many respectable young men with hopes of marriage, was herself at last deceived in them, and bore about her an indication that deceived no one. During the three years that her father lived after this too domestic calamity, he confined her in a country-house, leaving her only the liberty of a garden, fenced with high walls. He died at Paris: and the mother, who fondly loved Egidia, went instantly and liberated her, permitting her to return to Avignon, while she herself hid her grief, it is said, with young Gasparin de l'Œuf, in the villa. Egidia was resolved to enjoy the first moments

[1] From "Beside" to "theirs" added in 2nd ed.

of freedom, and perhaps to show how little she cared for an unforgiving father. No one however at Avignon, beyond the family, had yet heard anything of his decease. The evening of her liberation she walked along the banks of the Durance, with her favourite spaniel, which had become fat and unwieldy by his confinement, and by lying all day under the southern wall of the garden, and, having never been combed nor washed, exhibited every sign of dirtiness and decrepitude. To render him smarter, she adorned him again with his rich silver collar, now fitting him no longer, and hardly by any effort to be clasped about his voluminous neck. He escaped from her, dragging after him the scarlet ribbon, which she had formed into a chain, that it might appear the richer with its festoons about it, and that she might hold the last object of her love the faster. On the banks of the river he struggled with both paws to disengage the collar, and unhappily one of them passed through a link of the ribbon. Frightened and half-blind, he ran on his three legs he knew not whither, and tumbled through some low willows into the Durance. Egidia caught at the end of the ribbon; and, the bank giving way, she fell with him into deep water. She had, the moment before, looked in vain for assistance to catch her spaniel for her, and had cast a reproachful glance toward the bridge, about a hundred paces off, on which Tenerin de Gisors was leaning, with his arms folded upon the battlement.

"Now," said he to himself, "one woman at least would die for me. She implored my pity before she committed the rash act—as such acts are called on other occasions."

Without stirring a foot or unfolding an arm, he added pathetically from Ovid,

> Sic, ubi fata vocant, udis abjectus in herbis,
> Ad vada Mæandri concinit albus olor.[1]

We will not inquire whether the verses are the more misplaced by the poet,[2] or were the more misapplied by the reciter. Tenerin now stepped forward, both to preserve his conquest and add solemnity to his triumph. He lost however the opportunity of saving his mistress, and saw her carried to the other side of the river by two stout peasants, who had been purchasing some barrels in readiness for the

[1] Heroid., vii. 1.

[2] 1st ed. has a note by W. S. L. as follows: "Many modern critics have believed them spurious, and some manuscripts are without them."

vintage, and who placed her with her face downward, that the water might run out of her mouth. He gave them a *livre*, on condition that they should declare he alone had saved the lady: he then quietly walked up to his neck in the stream, turned back again, and assisted (or rather followed) the youths in conveying her to the monastery near the city-gate.

Here he learned, after many vain inquiries, that the lady was no other than the daughter of Philibert de la Haye. Perpetually had he heard in every conversation the praises of Cyrilla; of her beauty, her temper, her reserve, her accomplishments; and what a lucky thing for her was the false step of her sister, immured for life, and leaving her in sole expectation of a vast inheritance. Hastening homeward, he dressed himself in more gallant trim, and went forthwith to the Bishop of Carpentras, then at Avignon, to whom he did not find admittance, as his lordship had only that morning received intelligence of his brother-in-law's decease. He expressed by letter his gratitude to Divine Providence, for having enabled him to rescue the loveliest of her sex from the horrors of a watery grave: announced his rank, his fortune (not indeed to be mentioned or thought of in comparison with her merits), and entreated the honour of a union with her, if his lordship could sympathise with him in feeling that such purity ought never to have been enfolded (might he say it?) in the arms of any man who was not destined to be her husband.

"Ah!" said the bishop when he had perused the letter, "the young man too well knows what has happened: who does not? The holy Father himself hath shed paternal tears upon it. Providential this falling into the water! this endangering of a sinful life! May it awaken her remorse and repentance, as it hath awakened his pity and compassion! His proceeding is liberal and delicate: he could not speak more passionately and more guardedly. He was (now I find) one of her early admirers. No reference to others; no reproaches. True love wears well. I do not like this matter to grow too public. I will set out for Carpentras [1] in another hour, first writing a few lines, directing M. Tenerin to meet me at the palace this evening, as soon as may be convenient. We must forgive the fault of Egidia now she has found a good match; and we may put on mourning for the father, my worthy brother-in-law, next week."

[1] 1st ed. has a note by W. S. L. as follows: "Carpentras is about fourteen miles from Avignon."

Such were the cogitations and plans of the bishop ; and he carried them at once into execution ; for, knowing what the frailty of human nature is, as if he knew it from inspiration, he had by no means unshaken faith in the waters of the Durance as restorative or conservative of chastity.

Tenerin has been since observed to whistle oftener than to sing ; and when he begins to warble any of his amatory lays, which seldom happens, the words do not please him as they used to do, and he breaks off abruptly. A friend of his said to him in my presence, "Your ear, Tenerin, has grown fastidious, since you walked up to it in the water on the first of August."

BOCCACCIO. Francesco ! the more I reflect on the story you have related to us, the more plainly do I perceive how natural it is, and this too in the very peculiarity that appeared to me at first as being the contrary. Unless we make a selection of subjects, unless we observe their heights and distances, unless we give them their angles and shades, we may as well paint with white-wash. We do not want strange events, so much as those by which we are admitted into the recesses, or carried on amid the operations, of the human mind. We are stimulated by its activity ; but we are greatly more pleased at surveying it leisurely in its quiescent state, uncovered and unsuspicious. Few however are capable of describing, or even of remarking it ; while strange and unexpected contingencies are the commonest pedlary of the markets, and the joint patrimony of the tapsters.

I have drawn so largely from my brain for the production of a hundred stories, many of which I confess are witless and worthless, and many just as Ser Geoffreddo saw them, incomplete, that if my memory did not come to my assistance, I should be mistrustful of my imagination.

CHAUCER. Ungrateful man ! the world never found one like it.[1]

BOCCACCIO. Are Englishmen so Asiatic in the profusion of compliments ?

I know not, Francesco, whether you may deem this cathedral a befitting place for narratives of love.

PETRARCA. No place is more befitting ; since if the love be holy, no sentiment is essentially so divine ; and if unholy, we may pray

[1] 1st ed. reads : "it, and could not promise nor hold another such. BOCCACCIO," etc.

the more devoutly and effectually in such an audience for the souls of those who harboured it. Beside which, the coolness of the aisles and their silence, and their solitariness at the extremity of the city, would check within us any motive or tendency to lasciviousness and lightness, if the subject should lie that way, and if your spirits should incautiously follow it, my friend, Giovanni, as (pardon my sincerity !) they are somewhat too propense.

BOCCACCIO. My scruples are satisfied and removed.

The air of Naples is not so inclement as that of our Arezzo : and there are some who will tell us, if we listen to them, that few places in the world are more favourable and conducive to amorous inclinations. I often heard it while I resided there ; and the pulpit gave an echo to the public voice. Strange then it may appear to you, that jealousy should find a place in the connubial state, and after a year or more of marriage : nevertheless, so it happened.

The Prince of Policastro was united to a lady of his own rank ; and yet he could not be quite so happy as he should have been with her. She brought him a magnificent dowry ; and I never saw valets more covered with lace, fringes, knots, and everything else that ought to content the lordly heart, than I have seen behind the chairs of the Prince and Princess of Policastro. Alas ! what are all the blessings of this sublunary world, to the lord whose lady has thin lips ! The princess was very loving ; as much after the first year as the prince was after the first night. Even this would not content him.

Time, Ser Geoffreddo, remembering that Love and he, in some other planet, flew together, and neither left the other behind, is angry to be outstript by him, and challenges him to a trial of speed every day. The tiresome dotard is always distanced, yet always calls hoarsely after him ; as if he had ever seen Love turn back again, any more than Love had seen him. Well, let them settle the matter between themselves.

Would you believe it ? the princess could not make her husband in the least the fonder of her by all her assiduities ; not even by watching him while he was awake, more assiduously than the tenderest mother ever watched her sleeping infant. Although, to vary her fascinations and enchantments, she called him wretch and villain, he was afterward as wretched and villanous as if she never had taken half the pains about him.

She had brought in her train a certain Jacometta, whom she persuaded to espy his motions. He was soon aware of it, and calling her to him, said,

"Discreet and fair Jacometta, the princess, you know very well, thinks me inattentive to her, and being unable to fix on any other object of suspicion, she marks out you, and boasts among her friends that she has persuaded a foolish girl to follow and watch me, that she may at last, by the temptation she throws into our way, rid herself of a beauty who in future might give her great uneasiness. Certainly, if my heart could wander, its wanderings would be near home. I do not exactly say I should prefer you to every woman on earth, for reason and gratitude must guide my passion; and, unless where I might expect to find attachment, I shall ever remain indifferent to personal charms. You may relate to your mistress whatever you think proper of this conversation. If you believe a person of your own sex can be more attached and faithful to you than the most circumspect of ours, then repeat the whole. If on the contrary you imagine that I can be hereafter of any use to you, and that it is my interest to keep secret any confidence with which you may honour me, the princess has now enabled us to avoid being circumvented by her. It can not hurt me: you are young, unsettled, incautious, and unsuspicious."

Jacometta held down her head in confusion: the prince taking her by the hand, requested her not to think he was offended. He persuaded her to let him meet her privately, that he might give her warning if anything should occur, and that he might assist her to turn aside the machinations of their enemy. The first time they met, nothing had occurred: he pressed her hand, slipt a valuable ring on one of the fingers, and passed. The second time nothing material, nothing but what might be warded off: let the worst happen, the friend who gave him information of the designs laid against her, would receive her. The princess saw with wonder and admiration the earnestness with which Jacometta watched for her. The faithless man could hardly move hand or foot without a motion on the part of her attendant. She had observed him near the chamber-door of Jacometta, and laughed in her heart at the beguiled deceiver. "Do you know, Jacometta, I myself saw him within two paces of your bedroom!"

"I am quite confident it was he, madam!" answered Jacometta:

"and I do believe in my conscience he comes every night. What[1] he wants I can not imagine. He seems to stop before the tube-roses and carnations on the balustrade, whether to smell at them a little, or to catch the fresh breezes from Sorrento. I fancied at first he might be restless and unhappy (pardon me, madonna!) at your differences."

"No, no," said the princess, with a smile, "I understand what he wants: never mind: make no inquiries: he is little aware how we are planning to catch him: he has seen you look after him: he fancies that you care about him, that you really like him, absolutely love him—I could almost laugh—that you would (foolish man! foolish man! genuine Policastro!) listen to him. Do you understand?"

Jacometta's two ears reddened into transparency; and, clapping a hand on each, she cried, after a long sigh, "Lord! can he think of me? is he mad? does he take a poor girl for a princess? Generally I sleep soundly; but once or twice he has awakened me, perhaps not well knowing the passage. But if indeed he is so very wicked as to design to ruin me, and, what is worse, to deceive the best of ladies, might it not be advisable to fasten in the centre and in the sides of the corridor, five, or six, or seven sharp swords, with their points toward whoever——"

"Jacometta! do nothing violently; nothing rashly; nothing without me."

There was only one thing that Jacometta wished to do without the princess; and certainly she was disposed to do nothing violently or rashly; for she was now completely in the interest (these holy walls forbid me to speak more explicitly) of Policastro.

"We will be a match for him," said the princess. "You must leave your room-door open to-night."

Jacometta fell on her knees, and declared she was honest though poor—an exclamation which I dare say, Messer Geoffreddo, you have often heard in Italy: it being the preface to every act of roguery and lubricity, unless from a knight or knight's lady. The Princess of Policastro was ignorant of this, and so was Jacometta when she used it. The mistress insisted; the attendant deprecated.

"Simple child! no earthly mischief shall befall you. To-night you shall sleep in my bed, and I in yours, awaiting the false wretch miscalled my husband."

[1] From "What" to "a poor girl for a princess," added in 2nd ed.

Satisfied with the ingenuity of her device, the princess was excessively courteous to the prince at dinner, and indeed throughout the whole day. He on his part was in transports, he said, at her affability and sweet amiable temper. Poor Jacometta really knew not what to do: scarcely for one moment could she speak to the prince, that he might be on his guard.

"Do it! do it!" said he, pressing her hand as she passed him. "We must submit."

At the proper time he went in his slippers to the bedroom of the princess, and entered the spacious bed; which, like the domains of the rich, is never quite spacious enough for them. Jacometta was persuaded to utter no exclamation in the beginning, and was allowed to employ whatever vehemence she pleased at a fitter moment. The princess tossed about in Jacometta's bed, inveighing most furiously against her faithless husband; her passionate voice was hardly in any degree suppressed. Jacometta too tossed about in the princess's bed, and her voice laboured under little less suppression. At last the principal cause of vexation, with the jealous wife, was the unreasonable time to which her husband protracted the commission of his infidelity. After two hours or thereabout, she began to question whether he really had ever been unfaithful at all, began to be of opinion that there are malicious people in the world, and returned to her own chamber. She fancied she heard voices within, and listening attentively, distinguished these outcries.

"No resistance, madam! An injured husband claims imperatively his promised bliss, denied him not through antipathy, not through hatred, not through any demerits on his part, but through unjust and barbarous jealousy. Resist! bite! beat me! 'Villain' —'ravisher'—am I? am I? Excruciated as I am, wronged, robbed of my happiness, of my sacred conjugal rights, may the blessed Virgin never countenance me, never look on me or listen to me, if this is not the last time I ask them, or if ever I accept them though offered."

At which, he rushed indignantly from the bed, threw open the door, and pushing aside the princess, cried raving, "Vile treacherous girl! standing there, peeping! half-naked! At your infantine age dare you thus intrude upon the holy mysteries of the marriage-bed?"

Screaming out these words, he ran like one possessed by the devil into his own room, bolted the door with vehemence, locked it, cursed it, slipped between the sheets, and slept soundly.

The princess was astonished: she asked herself, why did not I do this? why did not I do that? the reason was, she had learnt her own part, but not his. Scarcely had she entered her chamber, when Jacometta fell upon her neck, sobbing aloud, and declaring that nothing but her providential presence could have saved her. She had muffled herself up, she said, folding the bed-clothes about her double and triple, and was several times on the point of calling up the whole household in her extremity, strict as was her mistress's charge upon her to be silent. The princess threw a shower of odoriferous waters over her, and took every care to restore her spirits and to preserve her from a hysterical fit, after such exertion and exhaustion. When she was rather more recovered, she dropped on her knees before her lady, and entreated and implored that, on the renewal of her love in its pristine ardour for the prince, she never would tell him in any moment of tender confidence, that it was she who was in the bed.

The princess was slow to give the promise; for she was very conscientious. At last however she gave it, saying, "The prince my husband has taken a most awful oath, never to renew the moments you apprehend. Our Lady strengthen me to bear my heavy affliction! Her divine grace has cured my agonised breast of its inveterate jealousy."

She paused for some time; then, drying her tears, for she had shed several, she invited Jacometta to sit upon the bedside with her. Jacometta did so; and the princess, taking her hand, continued; "I hardly know what is passing in my mind, Jacometta! I found it difficult to bear an injury, though an empty and unreal one; let me try whether the efforts I make will enable me to endure a misfortune —on the faith of a woman, my dear Jacometta, no unreal nor empty one. Policastro is young: it would be unreasonable in me to desire he should lead the life of an anchorite, and perhaps not quite reasonable in him to expect the miracle of my blood congealing."

After this narration, Messer Francesco walked toward the high altar and made his genuflexion: the same did Messer Giovanni, and, in the act of it, slapped Ser Geoffreddo on the shoulder, telling him he might dispense with the ceremony, by reason of his inflexible boots and the buck-skin paling about his loins. Ser Geoffreddo did it nevertheless, and with equal devotion. His two friends then took him between them to the house of Messer Francesco, where dinner had been some time waiting.

VI. FRA FILIPPO LIPPI AND POPE EUGENIUS THE FOURTH

(*Wks.*, ii., 1846; *Wks.*, iii., 1876.)

EUGENIUS. Filippo! I am informed by my son Cosimo de' Medici of many things relating to thy life and actions, and among the rest, of thy throwing off the habit of a friar. Speak to me as to a friend. Was that well done?

FILIPPO. Holy Father! it was done most unadvisedly.

EUGENIUS. Continue to treat me with the same confidence and ingenuousness; and, beside the remuneration I intend to bestow on thee for the paintings wherewith thou hast adorned my palace, I will remove with my own hand the heavy accumulation of thy sins, and ward off the peril of fresh ones, placing within thy reach every worldly solace and contentment.

FILIPPO. Infinite thanks, Holy Father! from the innermost heart of your unworthy servant, whose duty and wishes bind him alike and equally to a strict compliance with your paternal commands.

EUGENIUS. Was it a love of the world and its vanities that induced thee to throw aside the frock?

FILIPPO. It was indeed, Holy Father! I never had the courage to mention it in confession among my manifold offences.

EUGENIUS. Bad! bad! Repentance is of little use to the sinner, unless he pour it from a full and overflowing heart into the capacious ear of the confessor. Ye must not go straightforward and bluntly up to your Maker, startling him with the horrors of your guilty conscience. Order, decency, time, place, opportunity, must be observed.

FILIPPO. I have observed the greater part of them: time, place, and opportunity.

EUGENIUS. That is much. In consideration of it, I hereby absolve thee.

FILIPPO. I feel quite easy, quite new-born.

EUGENIUS. I am desirous of hearing what sort of feelings thou experiencest, when thou givest loose to thy intractable and unruly wishes. Now, this love of the world, what can it mean? A love of music, of dancing, of riding? What in short is it in thee?

FILIPPO. Holy Father! I was ever of a hot and amorous con stitution.

EUGENIUS. Well, well! I can guess, within a trifle, what that leads unto. I very much disapprove of it, whatever it may be. And then? and then? Prythee go on: I am inflamed with a miraculous zeal to cleanse thee.

FILIPPO. I have committed many follies, and some sins.

EUGENIUS. Let me hear the sins; I do not trouble my head about the follies; the Church has no business with them. The state is founded on follies, the Church on sins. Come then, unsack them.

FILIPPO. Concupiscence is both a folly and a sin. I felt more and more of it when I ceased to be a monk, not having (for a time) so ready means of allaying it.

EUGENIUS. No doubt. Thou shouldst have thought again and again before thou strippedst off the cowl.

FILIPPO. Ah! Holy Father! I am sore at heart. I thought indeed how often it had held two heads together under it, and that stripping it off was double decapitation. But compensation and contentment came, and we were warm enough without it.

EUGENIUS. I am minded to reprove thee gravely. No wonder it pleased the Virgin, and the saints about her, to permit that the enemy of our faith should lead thee captive into Barbary.

FILIPPO. The pleasure was all on their side.

EUGENIUS. I have heard a great many stories both of males and females who were taken by Tunisians and Algerines: and although there is a sameness in certain parts of them, my especial benevolence toward thee, worthy Filippo, would induce me to lend a vacant ear to thy report. And now, good Filippo, I could sip a small glass of muscatel or Orvieto, and turn over a few bleached almonds, or essay a smart dried apricot at intervals, and listen while thou relatest to me the manners and customs of that country, and particularly as touching thy own adversities. First, how wast thou taken?

FILIPPO. I was visiting at Pesaro my worshipful friend the canonico, Andrea Paccone, who delighted in the guitar, played it skilfully, and was always fond of hearing it well accompanied by the

voice. My own instrument I had brought with me, together with many gay Florentine songs, some of which were of such a turn and tendency, that the canonico thought they would sound better on water, and rather far from shore, than within the walls of the canonicate. He proposed then, one evening when there was little wind stirring, to exercise three young abbates * on their several parts, a little way out of hearing from the water's edge.

EUGENIUS. I disapprove of exercising young abbates in that manner.

FILIPPO. Inadvertently, O Holy Father! I have made the affair seem worse than it really was. In fact, there were only two genuine abbates; the third was Donna Lisetta, the good canonico's pretty niece, who looks so archly at your Holiness when you bend your knees before her at bed-time.

EUGENIUS. How? Where?

FILIPPO. She is the angel on the right-hand side of the Holy Family, with a tip of amethyst-coloured wing over a basket of figs and pomegranates. I painted her from memory: she was then only fifteen, and worthy to be the niece of an archbishop. Alas! she never will be: she plays and sings among the infidels, and perhaps would eat a landrail on a Friday as unreluctantly as she would a roach.

EUGENIUS. Poor soul! So this is the angel with the amethyst-coloured wing? I thought she looked wanton: we must pray for her release—from the bondage of sin. What followed in your excursion?

FILIPPO. Singing, playing, fresh air, and plashing water, stimulated our appetites. We had brought no eatable with us but fruit and thin *marzopane*, of which the sugar and rose-water were inadequate to ward off hunger; and the sight of a fishing-vessel between us and Ancona, raised our host's immoderately. "Yonder smack," said he, "is sailing at this moment just over the very best sole-bank in the Adriatic. If she continues her course and we run toward her, we may be supplied, I trust in God, with the finest fish in Christendom. Methinks I see already the bellies of those magnificent soles bestar the deck, and emulate the glories of the orient sky." He gave his orders with such a majestic air, that he looked rather like an admiral than a priest.

* Little boys, wearing clerical habits, are often called *abbati*.—W. S. L.

EUGENIUS. How now, rogue! Why should not the churchman look majestically and courageously? I myself have found occasion for it, and exerted it.

FILIPPO. The world knows the prowess of your Holiness.

EUGENIUS. Not mine, not mine, Filippo! but His who gave me the sword and the keys, and the will and the discretion to use them. I trust the canonico did not misapply his station and power, by taking the fish at any unreasonably low price; and that he gave his blessing to the remainder, and to the poor fishermen and to their nets.

FILIPPO. He was angry at observing that the vessel, while he thought it was within hail, stood out again to sea.

EUGENIUS. He ought to have borne more manfully so slight a vexation.

FILIPPO. On the contrary, he swore bitterly he would have the master's ear between his thumb and forefinger in another half-hour, and regretted that he had cut his nails in the morning lest they should grate on his guitar. "They may fish well," cried he, "but they can neither sail nor row; and, when I am in the middle of that tub of theirs, I will teach them more than they look for." Sure enough he was in the middle of it at the time he fixed: but it was by aid of a rope about his arms, and the end of another laid lustily on his back and shoulders. "Mount, lazy long-chined turnspit, as thou valuest thy life," cried Abdul the corsair, "and away for Tunis." If silence is consent, he had it. The captain, in the Sicilian dialect, told us we might talk freely, for he had taken his siesta. "Whose guitars are those?" said he. As the canonico raised his eyes to heaven and answered nothing, I replied, "Sir, one is mine: the other is my worthy friend's there." Next he asked the canonico to what market he was taking those young slaves, pointing to the abbates. The canonico sobbed and could not utter one word. I related the whole story; at which he laughed. He then took up the music, and commanded my reverend guest to sing an air peculiarly tender, invoking the compassion of a nymph, and calling her cold as ice. Never did so many or such profound sighs accompany it. When it ended, he sang one himself in his own language, on a lady whose eyes were exactly like the scimitars of Damascus, and whose eyebrows met in the middle like the cudgels of prize-fighters. On the whole she resembled both sun and moon, with the simple difference that she never allowed herself to be seen, lest all the nations of the earth

should go to war for her, and not a man be left to breathe out his soul before her. This poem had obtained the prize at the University of Fez, had been translated into the Arabic, the Persian, and the Turkish languages, and was the favourite lay of the corsair. He invited me lastly to try my talent. I played the same air on the guitar, and apologised for omitting the words, from my utter ignorance of the Moorish. Abdul was much pleased, and took the trouble to convince me that the poetry they conveyed, which he translated literally, was incomparably better than ours. "Cold as ice!" he repeated, scoffing: anybody might say that who had seen Atlas: but a genuine poet would rather say, "Cold as a lizard or a lobster." There is no controverting a critic who has twenty stout rowers and twenty well-knotted rope-ends. Added to which, he seemed to know as much of the matter as the generality of those who talk about it. He was gratified by my attention and edification, and thus continued: "I have remarked in the songs I have heard, that these wild woodland creatures of the west, these nymphs, are a strange fantastical race. But are your poets not ashamed to complain of their inconstancy? Whose fault is that? If ever it should be my fortune to take one, I would try whether I could not bring her down to the level of her sex; and if her inconstancy caused any complaints, by Allah! they should be louder and shriller than ever rose from the throat of Abdul." I still thought it better to be a disciple than a commentator.

EUGENIUS. If we could convert this barbarian and detain him awhile at Rome, he would learn that women and nymphs (and inconstancy also) are one and the same. These cruel men have no lenity, no suavity. They who do not as they would be done by, are done by very much as they do. Women will glide away from them like water; they can better bear two masters than half one; and a new metal must be discovered before any bars are strong enough to confine them. But proceed with your narrative.

FILIPPO. Night had now closed upon us. Abdul placed the younger of the company apart, and after giving them some boiled rice, sent them down into his own cabin. The sailors, observing the consideration and distinction with which their master had treated me, were civil and obliging. Permission was granted me, at my request, to sleep on deck.

EUGENIUS. What became of your canonico?

FILIPPO. The crew called him a conger, a priest, and a porpoise

EUGENIUS. Foul-mouthed knaves! could not one of these terms content them? On thy leaving Barbary was he left behind?

FILIPPO. Your Holiness consecrated him, the other day, Bishop of Macerata.

EUGENIUS. True, true; I remember the name, Saccone. How did he contrive to get off?

FILIPPO. He was worth little at any work; and such men are the quickest both to get off and to get on. Abdul told me he had received three thousand crowns for his ransom.

EUGENIUS. He was worth more to him than to me. I received but two first-fruits, and such other things as of right belong to me by inheritance. The bishopric is passably rich: he may serve thee.

FILIPPO. While he was a canonico he was a jolly fellow; not very generous; for jolly fellows are seldom that; but he would give a friend a dinner, a flask of wine or two in preference, and a piece of advice as readily as either. I waited on Monsignor at Macerata, soon after his elevation.

EUGENIUS. He must have been heartily glad to embrace his companion in captivity, and the more especially as he himself was the cause of so grievous a misfortune.

FILIPPO. He sent me word he was so unwell he could not see me. "What!" said I to his valet, "is Monsignor's complaint in his eyes?" The fellow shrugged up his shoulders and walked away. Not believing that the message was a refusal to admit me, I went straight up-stairs, and finding the door of an ante-chamber half open, and a chaplain mulling an egg-posset over the fire, I accosted him. The air of familiarity and satisfaction he observed in me, left no doubt in his mind that I had been invited by his patron. "Will the man never come?" cried his lordship. "Yes, Monsignor!" exclaimed I, running in and embracing him; "behold him here!" He started back, and then I first discovered the wide difference between an old friend and an egg-posset.

EUGENIUS. Son Filippo! thou hast seen but little of the world, and art but just come from Barbary. Go on.

FILIPPO. "Fra Filippo!" said he gravely, "I am glad to see you. I did not expect you just at present: I am not very well: I had ordered a medicine and was impatient to take it. If you will favour me with the name of your inn, I will send for you when I am in

a condition to receive you ; perhaps within a day or two." "Monsignor !" said I, "a change of residence often gives a man a cold, and oftener a change of fortune. Whether you caught yours upon deck (where we last saw each other), from being more exposed than usual, or whether the mitre holds wind, is no question for me, and no concern of mine."

EUGENIUS. A just reproof, if an archbishop had made it. On uttering it, I hope thou kneeledst and kissedst his hand.

FILIPPO. I did not indeed.

EUGENIUS. O! there wert thou greatly in the wrong. Having, it is reported, a good thousand crowns yearly of patrimony, and a canonicate worth six hundred more, he might have attempted to relieve thee from slavery, by assisting thy relatives in thy redemption.

FILIPPO. The three thousand crowns were the uttermost he could raise, he declared to Abdul, and he asserted that a part of the money was contributed by the inhabitants of Pesaro "Do they act out of pure mercy ?" said he. "Ay, they must, for what else could move them in behalf of such a lazy unserviceable street-fed cur ?" In the morning, at sunrise, he was sent a-board. And now, the vessel being under weigh, "I have a letter from my lord Abdul," said the master, "which, being in thy language, two fellow-slaves shall read unto thee publicly." They came forward and began the reading. "Yesterday I purchased these two slaves from a cruel unrelenting master, under whose lash they have laboured for nearly thirty years. I hereby give orders that five ounces of my own gold be weighed out to them." Here one of the slaves fell on his face ; the other lifted up his hands, praised God, and blessed his benefactor.

EUGENIUS. The pirate ? the unconverted pirate ?

FILIPPO. Even so. "Here is another slip of paper for thyself to read immediately in my presence," said the master. The words it contained were, "Do thou the same, or there enters thy lips neither food nor water until thou landest in Italy. I permit thee to carry away more than double the sum : I am no suttler : I do not contract for thy sustenance." The canonico asked of the master whether he knew the contents of the letter ; he replied, no. "Tell your master, lord Abdul, that I shall take them into consideration." "My lord expected a much plainer answer, and commanded me, in case of any such as thou hast delivered, to break this seal." He pressed it to his forehead and then broke it. Having perused the characters reveren-

tially, "Christian! dost thou consent?" The canonico fell on his knees, and overthrew the two poor wretches who, saying their prayers, had remained in the same posture before him quite unnoticed. "Open thy trunk and take out thy money-bag, or I will make room for it in thy bladder." The canonico was prompt in the execution of the command. The master drew out his scales, and desired the canonico to weigh with his own hand five ounces. He groaned and trembled: the balance was unsteady. "Throw in another piece: it will not vitiate the agreement," cried the master. It was done. Fear and grief are among the thirsty passions, but add little to the appetite. It seemed however as if every sigh had left a vacancy in the stomach of the canonico. At dinner the cook brought him a salted bonito, half an ell in length; and in five minutes his Reverence was drawing his middle finger along the white back-bone, out of sheer idleness, until were placed before him some as fine dried locusts as ever provisioned the tents of Africa, together with olives the size of eggs and colour of bruises, shining in oil and brine. He found them savoury and pulpy, and, as the last love supersedes the foregoing, he gave them the preference, even over the delicate locusts. When he had finished them, he modestly requested a can of water. A sailor brought a large flask, and poured forth a plentiful supply. The canonico engulfed the whole, and instantly threw himself back in convulsive agony. "How is this?" cried the sailor. The master ran up and, smelling the water, began to buffet him, exclaiming, as he turned round to all the crew, "How came this flask here?" All were innocent. It appeared however that it was a flask of mineral water, strongly sulphureous, taken out of a Neapolitan vessel, laden with a great abundance of it for some hospital in the Levant. It had taken the captor by surprise in the same manner as the canonico. He himself brought out instantly a capacious stone jar covered with dew, and invited the sufferer into the cabin. Here he drew forth two richly-cut wine-glasses, and, on filling one of them, the outside of it turned suddenly pale, with a myriad of indivisible drops, and the senses were refreshed with the most delicious fragrance. He held up the glass between himself and his guest, and looking at it attentively, said, "Here is no appearance of wine; all I can see is water. Nothing is wickeder than too much curiosity: we must take what Allah sends us, and render thanks for it, although it fall far short of our expectations. Beside, our Prophet would rather we should even

drink wine than poison." The canonico had not tasted wine for two months: a longer abstinence than ever canonico endured before. He drooped: but the master looked still more disconsolate. "I would give whatever I possess on earth rather than die of thirst," cried the canonico. "Who would not?" rejoined the captain, sighing and clasping his fingers. "If it were not contrary to my commands, I could touch at some cove or inlet." "Do, for the love of Christ!" exclaimed the canonico. "Or even sail back," continued the captain. "O Santa Vergine!" cried in anguish the canonico. "Despondency," said the captain, with calm solemnity, "has left many a man to be thrown overboard: it even renders the plague, and many other disorders, more fatal. Thirst too has a powerful effect in exasperating them. Overcome such weaknesses, or I must do my duty. The health of the ship's company is placed under my care; and our lord Abdul, if he suspected the pest, would throw a Jew, or a Christian, or even a bale of silk, into the sea: such is the disinterestedness and magnanimity of my lord Abdul." "He believes in fate; does he not?" said the canonico. "Doubtless: but he says it is as much fated that he should throw into the sea a fellow who is infected, as that the fellow should have ever been so." "Save me, O save me!" cried the canonico, moist as if the spray had pelted him. "Willingly, if possible," answered calmly the master. "At present I can discover no certain symptoms; for sweat, unless followed by general prostration, both of muscular strength and animal spirits, may be cured without a hook at the heel." "Giesu-Maria!" ejaculated the canonico.

EUGENIUS. And the monster could withstand that appeal?

FILIPPO. It seems so. The renegade who related to me, on my return, these events as they happened, was very circumstantial. He is a Corsican, and had killed many men in battle, and more out; but is (he gave me his word for it) on the whole an honest man.

EUGENIUS. How so? honest? and a renegade?

FILIPPO. He declared to me that, although the Mahometan is the best religion to live in, the Christian is the best to die in; and that, when he has made his fortune, he will make his confession, and lie snugly in the bosom of the Church.

EUGENIUS. See here the triumphs of our holy faith! The lost sheep will be found again.

FILIPPO. Having played the butcher first.

Eugenius. Return we to that bad man, the master or captain, who evinced no such dispositions.

Filippo. He added, "The other captives, though older men, have stouter hearts than thine." "Alas! they are longer used to hardships," answered he. "Dost thou believe, in thy conscience," said the captain, "that the water we have aboard would be harmless to them? for we have no other; and wine is costly; and our quantity might be insufficient for those who can afford to pay for it." "I will answer for their lives," replied the canonico. "With thy own?" interrogated sharply the Tunisian. "I must not tempt God," said, in tears, the religious man. "Let us be plain," said the master. "Thou knowest thy money is safe: I myself counted it before thee when I brought it from the scrivener's: thou hast sixty broad gold pieces: wilt thou be answerable, to the whole amount of them, for the lives of thy two countrymen if they drink this water?" "O Sir!" said the canonico, "I will give it, if, only for these few days of voyage, you vouchsafe me one bottle daily of that restorative wine of Bordeaux. The other two are less liable to the plague: they do not sorrow and sweat as I do. They are spare men. There is enough of me to infect a fleet with it; and I can not bear to think of being anywise the cause of evil to my fellow-creatures." "The wine is my patron's," cried the Tunisian; "he leaves everything at my discretion: should I deceive him?" "If he leaves everything at your discretion," observed the logician of Pesaro, "there is no deceit in disposing of it." The master appeared to be satisfied with the argument. "Thou shalt not find me exacting," said he; "give me the sixty pieces, and the wine shall be thine." At a signal, when the contract was agreed to, the two slaves entered, bringing a hamper of jars. "Read the contract before thou signest," cried the master. He read. "How is this? how is this? *Sixty golden ducats to the brothers Antonio and Bernabo Panini, for wine received from them?*" The aged men tottered under the stroke of joy; and Bernabo, who would have embraced his brother, fainted.

On the morrow there was a calm, and the weather was extremely sultry. The canonico sat in his shirt on deck, and was surprised to see, I forget which of the brothers, drink from a goblet a prodigious draught of water. "Hold!" cried he angrily; "you may eat instead; but putrid or sulphureous water, you have heard, may produce the plague, and honest men be the sufferers by your folly

and intemperance." They assured him the water was tasteless, and very excellent, and had been kept cool in the same kind of earthen jars as the wine. He tasted it, and lost his patience. It was better, he protested, than any wine in the world. They begged his acceptance of the jar containing it. But the master, who had witnessed at a distance the whole proceeding, now advanced, and, placing his hand against it, said sternly, "Let him have his own." Usually, when he had emptied the second bottle, a desire of converting the Mahometans came over him: and they showed themselves much less obstinate and refractory than they are generally thought. He selected those for edification who swore the oftenest and the loudest by the Prophet; and he boasted in his heart of having overcome, by precept and example, the stiffest tenet of their abominable creed. Certainly they drank wine, and somewhat freely. The canonico clapped his hands, and declared that even some of the apostles had been more pertinacious recusants of the faith.

EUGENIUS. Did he so? Cappari! I would not have made him a bishop for twice the money if I had known it earlier. Could not he have left them alone? Suppose one or other of them did doubt and persecute, was he the man to blab it out among the heathen?

FILIPPO. A judgment, it appears, fell on him for so doing. A very quiet sailor, who had always declined his invitations, and had always heard his arguments at a distance and in silence, being pressed and urged by him, and reproved somewhat arrogantly and loudly, as less docile than his messmates, at last lifted up his leg behind him, pulled off his right slipper, and counted deliberately and distinctly thirty-nine sound strokes of the same, on the canonico's broadest tablet, which (please your Holiness) might be called, not inaptly, from that day, the tablet of memory. In vain he cried out. Some of the mariners made their moves at chess and waved their left-hands as if desirous of no interruption; others went backward and forward about their business, and took no more notice than if their messmate was occupied in caulking a seam or notching a flint. The master himself, who saw the operation, heard the complaint in the evening, and lifted up his shoulders and eyebrows, as if the whole were quite unknown to him. Then, acting as judge-advocate, he called the young man before him and repeated the accusation. To this the defence was purely interrogative. "Why would he convert me? I never converted him." Turning to his spiritual guide, he said, "I

quite forgive thee: nay, I am ready to appear in thy favour, and to declare that, in general, thou hast been more decorous than people of thy faith and profession usually are, and hast not scattered on deck that inflammatory language which I, habited in the dress of a Greek, heard last Easter. I went into three churches; and the preachers in all three denounced the curse of Allah on every soul that differed from them a tittle. They were children of perdition, children of darkness, children of the devil, one and all. It seemed a matter of wonder to me, that, in such numerous families and of such indifferent parentage, so many slippers were kept under the heel. Mine, in an evil hour, escaped me: but I quite forgive thee. After this free pardon I will indulge thee with a short specimen of my preaching. I will call none of you a generation of vipers, as ye call one another; for vipers neither bite nor eat during many months of the year: I will call none of you wolves in sheep's clothing; for if ye are, it must be acknowledged that the clothing is very clumsily put on. You priests, however, take people's souls aboard whether they will or not, just as we do your bodies: and you make them pay much more for keeping these in slavery, than we make you pay for setting you free body and soul together. You declare that the precious souls, to the especial care of which Allah has called and appointed you, frequently grow corrupt, and stink in his nostrils. Now, I invoke thy own testimony to the fact: thy soul, gross as I imagine it to be from the greasy wallet that holds it, had no carnal thoughts whatsoever, and that thy carcase did not even receive a fly-blow, while it was under my custody. Thy guardian angel (I speak it in humility) could not ventilate thee better. Nevertheless, I should scorn to demand a single maravedi for my labour and skill, or for the wear and tear of my pantoufle. My reward will be in Paradise, where a houri is standing in the shade, above a vase of gold and silver fish, with a kiss on her lip, and an unbroken pair of green slippers in her hand for me." Saying which, he took off his foot again the one he had been using, and showed the sole of it, first to the master, then to all the crew, and declared it had become (as they might see) so smooth and oily by the application, that it was dangerous to walk on deck in it.

Eugenius. See! what notions these creatures have, both of their fool's paradise and of our holy faith! The seven sacraments, I warrant you, go for nothing! Purgatory, purgatory itself, goes for nothing!

FILIPPO LIPPI AND EUGENIUS IV

FILIPPO. Holy Father! we must stop thee. *That* does not go for nothing, however.

EUGENIUS. Filippo! God forbid I should suspect thee of any heretical taint; but this smells very like it. If thou hast it now, tell me honestly. I mean, hold thy tongue. Florentines are rather lax. Even Son Cosimo might be stricter: so they say: perhaps his enemies. The great always have them abundantly, beside those by whom they are served, and those also whom they serve. Now would I give a silver rose with my benediction on it, to know of a certainty what became of those poor creatures the abbates. The initiatory rite of Mahometanism is most diabolically malicious. According to the canons of our Catholic Church, it disqualifies the neophyte for holy orders, without going so far as adapting him to the choir of the pontifical chapel. They limp; they halt.

FILIPPO. Beatitude! which of them?

EUGENIUS. The unbelievers: they surely are found wanting.

FILIPPO. The unbelievers too?

EUGENIUS. Ay, ay, thou half renegade! Couldst not thou go over with a purse of silver, and try whether the souls of these captives be recoverable? Even if they should have submitted to such unholy rites, I venture to say they have repented.

FILIPPO. The devil is in them if they have not.

EUGENIUS. They may become again as good Christians as before.

FILIPPO. Easily, methinks.

EUGENIUS. Not so easily; but by aid of Holy Church in the administration of indulgences.

FILIPPO. They never wanted those, whatever they want.

EUGENIUS. The corsair then is not one of those ferocious creatures which appear to connect our species with the lion and panther.

FILIPPO. By no means, Holy Father! He is an honest man; so are many of his countrymen, bating the sacrament.

EUGENIUS. Bating! poor beguiled Filippo! Being unbaptised, they are only as the beasts that perish: nay worse: for the soul being imperishable, it must stick to their bodies at the last day, whether they will or no, and must sink with it into the fire and brimstone.

FILIPPO. Unbaptised! why, they baptise every morning.

EUGENIUS. Worse and worse! I thought they only missed the stirrup; I find they overleap the saddle. Obstinate blind reprobates! of whom it is written—of whom it is written—of whom, I

say, it is written—as shall be manifest before men and angels in the day of wrath.

FILIPPO. More is the pity! for they are hospitable, frank, and courteous. It is delightful to see their gardens, when one has not the weeding and irrigation of them. What fruit! what foliage! what trellises! what alcoves! what a contest of rose and jessamine for supremacy in odour! of lute and nightingale for victory in song! And how the little bright ripples of the docile brooks, the fresher for their races, leap up against one another, to look on! and how they chirrup and applaud, as if they too had a voice of some importance in these parties of pleasure that are loth to separate.

EUGENIUS. Parties of pleasure! birds, fruits, shallow-running waters, lute-players and wantons! Parties of pleasure! and composed of these! Tell me now, Filippo, tell me truly, what complexion in general have the discreeter females of that hapless country.

FILIPPO. The colour of an orange-flower, on which an over-laden bee has left a slight suffusion of her purest honey.

EUGENIUS. We must open their eyes.

FILIPPO. Knowing what excellent hides the slippers of this people are made of, I never once ventured on their less perfect theology, fearing to find it written that I should be a-bed on my face the next fortnight. My master had expressed his astonishment that a religion so admirable as ours was represented, should be the only one in the world the precepts of which are disregarded by all conditions of men. "Our Prophet," said he, "our Prophet ordered us to go forth and conquer; we did it: yours ordered you to sit quiet and forbear; and, after spitting in his face, you threw the order back into it, and fought like devils."

EUGENIUS. The barbarians talk of our Holy Scriptures as if they understood them perfectly. The impostor they follow has nothing but fustian and rhodomontade in his impudent lying book from beginning to end. I know it, Filippo, from those who have contrasted it, page by page, paragraph by paragraph, and have given the knave his due.

FILIPPO. Abdul is by no means deficient in a good opinion of his own capacity and his Prophet's all-sufficiency, but he never took me to task about my faith or his own.

EUGENIUS. How wert thou mainly occupied?

FILIPPO. I will give your Holiness a sample both of my employ-

ments and of his character. He was going one evening to a country-house, about fifteen miles from Tunis; and he ordered me to accompany him. I found there a spacious garden, overrun with wild-flowers and most luxuriant grass, in irregular tufts, according to the dryness or the humidity of the spot. The clematis overtopped the lemon and orange-trees; and the perennial pea, sent forth here a pink blossom, here a purple, here a white one, and, after holding (as it were) a short conversation with the humbler plants, sprang up about an old cypress, played among its branches, and mitigated its gloom. White pigeons, and others in colour like the dawn of day, looked down on us and ceased to coo, until some of their companions, in whom they had more confidence, encouraged them loudly from remoter boughs, or alighted on the shoulders of Abdul, at whose side I was standing. A few of them examined me in every position their inquisitive eyes could take; displaying all the advantages of their versatile necks, and pretending querulous fear in the midst of petulant approaches.

EUGENIUS. Is it of pigeons thou art talking, O Filippo? I hope it may be.

FILIPPO. Of Abdul's pigeons. He was fond of taming all creatures; men, horses, pigeons, equally: but he tamed them all by kindness. In this wilderness is an edifice not unlike our Italian chapter-houses built by the Lombards, with long narrow windows, high above the ground. The centre is now a bath, the waters of which, in another part of the enclosure, had supplied a fountain, at present in ruins, and covered by tufted canes, and by every variety of aquatic plants. The structure has no remains of roof: and, of six windows, one alone is unconcealed by ivy. This had been walled up long ago, and the cement in the inside of it was hard and polished. "Lippi!" said Abdul to me, after I had long admired the place in silence, "I leave to thy superintendence this bath and garden. Be sparing of the leaves and branches: make paths only wide enough for me. Let me see no mark of hatchet or pruning-hook, and tell the labourers that whoever takes a nest or an egg shall be impaled."

EUGENIUS. Monster! so then he would really have impaled a poor wretch for eating a bird's egg? How disproportionate is the punishment to the offence!

FILIPPO. He efficiently checked in his slaves the desire of transgressing his command. To spare them as much as possible, I ordered

them merely to open a few spaces, and to remove the weaker trees from the stronger. Meanwhile I drew on the smooth blank window the figure of Abdul and of a beautiful girl.

EUGENIUS. Rather say handmaiden: choicer expression; more decorous.

FILIPPO. Holy Father! I have been lately so much out of practice, I take the first that comes in my way. Handmaiden I will use in preference for the future.

EUGENIUS. On then! and God speed thee!

FILIPPO. I drew Abdul with a blooming handmaiden. One of his feet is resting on her lap, and she is drying the ankle with a saffron robe, of which the greater part is fallen in doing it. That she is a bondmaid is discernible, not only by her occupation, but by her humility and patience, by her loose and flowing brown hair, and by her eyes expressing the timidity at once of servitude and of fondness. The countenance was taken from fancy, and was the loveliest I could imagine: of the figure I had some idea, having seen it to advantage in Tunis. After seven days Abdul returned. He was delighted with the improvement made in the garden. I requested him to visit the bath. "We can do nothing to that," answered he impatiently. "There is no sudatory, no dormitory, no dressing-room, no couch. Sometimes I sit an hour there in the summer, because I never found a fly in it; the principal curse of hot countries, and against which plague there is neither prayer nor amulet, nor indeed any human defence." He went away into the house. At dinner he sent me from his table some quails and ortolans, and tomatas and honey and rice, beside a basket of fruit covered with moss and bay-leaves, under which I found a verdino fig, deliciously ripe, and bearing the impression of several small teeth, but certainly no reptile's.

EUGENIUS. There might have been poison in them, for all that.

FILIPPO. About two hours had passed, when I heard a whirr and a crash in the windows of the bath (where I had dined and was about to sleep), occasioned by the settling and again the flight of some pheasants. Abdul entered. "Beard of the Prophet! what hast thou been doing? That is myself! No, no, Lippi! thou never canst have seen her: the face proves it: but those limbs! thou hast divined them aright: thou hast had sweet dreams then! Dreams are large possessions: in them the possessor may cease to possess his own. To the slave, O Allah! to the slave is permitted what is

not his !—I burn with anguish to think how much—yea, at that very hour. I would not another should, even in a dream—— But, Lippi ! thou never canst have seen above the sandal ?" To which I answered, "I never have allowed my eyes to look even on that. But if any one of my lord Abdul's fair slaves resembles, as they surely must all do, in duty and docility, the figure I have represented, let it express to him my congratulation on his happiness." "I believe," said he, "such representations are forbidden by the Koran ; but as I do not remember it, I do not sin. There it shall stay, unless the angel Gabriel comes to forbid it." He smiled in saying so.

EUGENIUS. There is hope of this Abdul. His faith hangs about him more like oil than pitch.

FILIPPO. He inquired of me whether I often thought of those I loved in Italy, and whether I could bring them before my eyes at will. To remove all suspicion from him, I declared I always could, and that one beautiful object occupied all the cells of my brain by night and day. He paused and pondered, and then said, "Thou dost not love deeply." I thought I had given the true signs. "No, Lippi ! we who love ardently, we, with all our wishes, all the efforts of our souls, can not bring before us the features which, while they were present, we thought it impossible we ever could forget. Alas ! when we most love the absent, when we most desire to see her, we try in vain to bring her image back to us. The troubled heart shakes and confounds it, even as ruffled waters do with shadows. Hateful things are more hateful when they haunt our sleep : the lovely flee away, or are changed into less lovely."

EUGENIUS. What figures now have these unbelievers ?

FILIPPO. Various in their combinations as the letters or the numerals ; but they all, like these, signify something. Almeida (did I not inform your Holiness ?) has large hazel eyes——

EUGENIUS. Has she ? thou never toldest me that. Well, well ! and what else has she ? Mind ! be cautious ! use decent terms.

FILIPPO. Somewhat pouting lips.

EUGENIUS. Ha ! ha ! What did they pout at ?

FILIPPO. And she is rather plump than otherwise.

EUGENIUS. No harm in that.

FILIPPO. And moreover is cool, smooth, and firm as a nectarine gathered before sunrise.

EUGENIUS. Ha ! ha ! do not remind me of nectarines. I am very

fond of them; and this is not the season! Such females as thou describest, are said to be among the likeliest to give reasonable cause for suspicion. I would not judge harshly, I would not think uncharitably; but, unhappily, being at so great a distance from spiritual aid, peradventure a desire, a suggestion, an inkling—ay? If she, the lost Almeida, came before thee when her master was absent—which I trust she never did—— But those flowers and shrubs and odours and alleys and long grass and alcoves, might strangely hold, perplex, and entangle, two incautious young persons—ay?

FILIPPO. I confessed all I had to confess in this matter, the evening I landed.

EUGENIUS. Ho! I am no candidate for a seat at the rehearsal of confessions: but perhaps my absolution might be somewhat more pleasing and unconditional. Well! well! since I am unworthy of such confidence, go about thy business—paint! paint!

FILIPPO. Am I so unfortunate as to have offended your Beatitude?

EUGENIUS. Offend *me*, man! who offends *me*? I took an interest in thy adventures, and was concerned lest thou mightest have sinned; for by my soul! Filippo! those are the women that the devil hath set his mark on.

FILIPPO. It would do your Holiness's heart good to rub it out again, wherever he may have had the cunning to make it.

EUGENIUS. Deep! deep!

FILIPPO. Yet it may be got at; she being a Biscayan by birth, as she told me, and not only baptised, but going by sea along the coast for confirmation, when she was captured.

EUGENIUS. Alas! to what an imposition of hands was this tender young thing devoted! Poor soul!

FILIPPO. I sigh for her myself when I think of her.

EUGENIUS. Beware lest the sigh be mundane, and lest the thought recur too often. I wish it were presently in my power to examine her myself on her condition. What thinkest thou? Speak.

FILIPPO. Holy Father! she would laugh in your face.

EUGENIUS. So lost!

FILIPPO. She declared to me she thought she should have died, from the instant she was captured until she was comforted by Abdul: but that she was quite sure she should if she were ransomed.

EUGENIUS. Has the wretch then shaken her faith?

FILIPPO. The very last thing he would think of doing. Never did

I see the virtue of resignation in higher perfection than in the laughing light-hearted Almeida.

EUGENIUS. Lamentable! Poor lost creature! lost in this world and in the next.

FILIPPO. What could she do? how could she help herself?

EUGENIUS. She might have torn his eyes out, and have died a martyr.

FILIPPO. Or have been bastinaded, whipped, and given up to the cooks and scullions for it.

EUGENIUS. Martyrdom is the more glorious the greater the indignities it endures.

FILIPPO. Almeida seems unambitious. There are many in our Tuscany who would jump at the crown over those sloughs and briars, rather than perish without them: she never sighs after the like.

EUGENIUS. Nevertheless, what must she witness! what abominations! what superstitions!

FILIPPO. Abdul neither practises nor exacts any other superstition than ablutions.

EUGENIUS. Detestable rites! without our authority. I venture to affirm that, in the whole of Italy and Spain, no convent of monks or nuns contains a bath; and that the worst inmate of either would shudder at the idea of observing such a practice in common with the unbeliever. For the washing of the feet indeed we have the authority of the earlier Christians; and it may be done; but solemnly and sparingly. Thy residence among the Mahometans, I am afraid, hath rendered thee more favourable to them than beseems a Catholic, and thy mind, I do suspect, sometimes goes back into Barbary unreluctantly.

FILIPPO. While I continued in that country, although I was well treated, I often wished myself away, thinking of my friends in Florence, of music, of painting, of our villegiatura at the vintage-time; whether in the green and narrow glades of Pratolino, with lofty trees above us, and little rills unseen, and little bells about the necks of sheep and goats, tinkling together ambiguously; or amid the grey quarries or under the majestic walls of ancient Fiesole; or down in the woods of the Doccia, where the cypresses are of such a girth that, when a youth stands against one of them, and a maiden stands opposite, and they clasp it, their hands at the time do little more than meet. Beautiful scenes, on which Heaven smiles eternally,

how often has my heart ached for you! He who hath lived in this country, can enjoy no distant one. He breathes here another air; he lives more life; a brighter sun invigorates his studies, and serener stars influence his repose. Barbary hath also the blessing of climate; and although I do not desire to be there again, I feel sometimes a kind of regret at leaving it. A bell warbles the more mellifluously in the air when the sound of the stroke is over, and when another swims out from underneath it, and pants upon the element that gave it birth. In like manner the recollection of a thing is frequently more pleasing than the actuality; what is harsh is dropped in the space between. There is in Abdul a nobility of soul on which I often have reflected with admiration. I have seen many of the highest rank and distinction, in whom I could find nothing of the great man, excepting a fondness for low company, and an aptitude to shy and start at every spark of genius or virtue that sprang up above or before them. Abdul was solitary, but affable: he was proud, but patient and complacent. I ventured once to ask him, how the master of so rich a house in the city, of so many slaves, of so many horses and mules, of such cornfields, of such pastures, of such gardens, woods, and fountains, should experience any delight or satisfaction in infesting the open sea, the high-road of nations? Instead of answering my question, he asked me in return, whether I would not respect any relative of mine who avenged his country, enriched himself by his bravery, and endeared to him his friends and relatives by his bounty? On my reply in the affirmative, he said that his family had been deprived of possessions in Spain, much more valuable than all the ships and cargoes he could ever hope to capture, and that the remains of his nation were threatened with ruin and expulsion. "I do not fight," said he, "whenever it suits the convenience, or gratifies the malignity, or the caprice, of two silly quarrelsome princes, drawing my sword in perfectly good-humour, and sheathing it again at word of command, just when I begin to get into a passion. No; I fight on my own account; not as a hired assassin, or still baser journeyman."

EUGENIUS. It appears then really that the Infidels have some semblances of magnanimity and generosity?

FILIPPO. I thought so when I turned over the many changes of fine linen; and I was little short of conviction when I found at the bottom of my chest two hundred Venetian zecchins.

EUGENIUS. Corpo di Bacco! Better things, far better things,

I would fain do for thee, not exactly of this description; it would excite many heart-burnings. Information has been laid before me, Filippo, that thou art attached to a certain young person, by name Lucrezia, daughter of Francesco Buti, a citizen of Prato.

FILIPPO. I acknowledge my attachment: it continues.

EUGENIUS. Furthermore, that thou hast offspring by her.

FILIPPO. Alas! 'tis undeniable.

EUGENIUS. I will not only legitimatize the said offspring by *motu proprio* and rescript to consistory and chancery——

FILIPPO. Holy Father! Holy Father! For the love of the Virgin, not a word to consistory or chancery, of the two hundred zecchins. As I hope for salvation, I have but forty left: and thirty-nine would not serve them.

EUGENIUS. Fear nothing. Not only will I perform what I have promised, not only will I give the strictest order that no money be demanded by any officer of my courts, but, under the seal of Saint Peter, I will declare thee and Lucrezia Buti man and wife.

FILIPPO. Man and wife!

EUGENIUS. Moderate thy transport.

FILIPPO. O Holy Father! may I speak?

EUGENIUS. Surely she is not the wife of another?

FILIPPO. No indeed.

EUGENIUS. Nor within the degrees of consanguinity and affinity?

FILIPPO. No, no, no. But—man and wife! Consistory and chancery are nothing to this fulmination.

EUGENIUS. How so?

FILIPPO. It is man and wife the first fortnight, but wife and man ever after. The two figures change places: the unit is the decimal and the decimal is the unit.

EUGENIUS. What then can I do for thee?

FILIPPO. I love Lucrezia: let me love her: let her love me. I can make her at any time what she is not: I could never make her again what she is.

EUGENIUS. The only thing I can do then is to promise I will forget that I have heard anything about the matter. But, to forget it, I must hear it first.

FILIPPO. In the beautiful little town of Prato, reposing in its idleness against the hill that protects it from the north, and looking over fertile meadows, southward to Poggio Cajano, westward to Pistoja,

there is the convent of Santa Margarita. I was invited by the sisters to paint an altar-piece for the chapel. A novice of fifteen, my own sweet Lucrezia, came one day alone to see me work at my Madonna. Her blessed countenance had already looked down on every beholder lower by the knees. I myself who made her could almost have worshipped her.

EUGENIUS. Not while incomplete: no half-virgin will do.

FILIPPO. But there knelt Lucrezia! there she knelt! first looking with devotion at the Madonna, then with admiring wonder and grateful delight at the artist. Could so little a heart be divided? 'Twere a pity! There was enough for me: there is never enough for the Madonna. Resolving on a sudden that the object of my love should be the object of adoration to thousands, born and unborn, I swept my brush across the maternal face, and left a blank in heaven. The little girl screamed: I pressed her to my bosom.

EUGENIUS. In the chapel?

FILIPPO. I knew not where I was: I thought I was in Paradise.

EUGENIUS. If it was not in the chapel, the sin is venial. But a brush against a Madonna's mouth is worse than a beard against her votary's.

FILIPPO. I thought so too, Holy Father!

EUGENIUS. Thou sayest thou hast forty zecchins: I will try in due season to add forty more. The fisherman must not venture to measure forces with the pirate. Farewell! I pray God, my son Filippo, to have thee alway in His holy keeping.

VII. SAVONAROLA AND THE PRIOR OF S. MARCO [1]

(In Italian, *Savonarola e il Priore di San Marco*, 1860; Landor's English version of it was sent to his American publisher, Field, the same year, with a covering letter stating much had been omitted by the Italian printer of the original through "fear that the sentiments would offend the higher powers and obstruct the publication"; this English version, printed in the *London Review*, 1860, was included in Wheeler's *Letters and Unpublished Writings of Landor*, 1897.)

PRIOR. Jeronimo! dear Jeronimo! oftentimes have I been afflicted, but never so grievously as in this hour. Thou art abandoned to thy enemies, and there is no escape. The Holy Father [2] has found thee guilty.

SAVONAROLA. Alas! how many has he found guilty, and how many has he made so! *My* Holy Father, the Father who is in heaven, has too often found me guilty, even from infancy. Nevertheless has He deigned to show me the light of His countenance, and to confer on me the office of proclaiming His will. And now His right hand guides me on the road to expiate my many sins.

PRIOR. *Thy* many sins? What mortal ever lived more chastely, more charitably, more devoutly? And to die so! Oh, God of mercy! can human flesh endure the surrounding flames?

SAVONAROLA. Yes; that flesh which God hath prepared for it.

PRIOR. The Church has been openly offended. Why?

SAVONAROLA. Because the Church opposed God openly. Tell me, have I ever uttered a word contrary to the doctrine of the Apostles? Frequently have I preached before the people, but have abstained from declaring this truth, that under the seat of our Roman pontiffs more Christian blood has been shed on behalf of Europe than under all the worst Roman emperors in the whole of it.

[1] Historically, there was no opportunity for such a Conversation. Mr. Stephen Wheeler suggests that the Conversation might be brought within the bounds of possibility by substituting Jacopo Nicoolini for the Prior of S. Marco. See Villari.

[2] Pope Alexander VI.

PRIOR. It may be true; but there is always danger in speaking ill of dignitaries.

SAVONAROLA. If I understand the word, it means the *worthy*. Before them I stand humiliated, not before the arrogant and presumptuous.

I am condemned to death; so art thou, so are all, even ere they cried from the cradle.

PRIOR. Imperturbable is thy faith, thy courage superhuman.

SAVONAROLA. Superhuman it is, but it is not mine. I have followed with tardy pace the Precursor. He who walks in the dark will be guided more safely by one large and clear light, although distant, than by many smaller which sparkle on both sides of him. The Apostols [1] have directed me, and my support was Christ.

PRIOR. Yet the first and most sublime of martyrs, our Saviour himself, prayed of his Father that the bitter cup might pass from him.

SAVONAROLA. It did not pass from him. The Son drank of it, bowed his head, and died. Better men than I am have borne testimony to the truth; I also have been deemed worthy to die for it.

PRIOR. Better men! None, none.

SAVONAROLA. Say not so. It appears to have been the will of Providence that some of them should live longer and teach more effectually. The fruit in the garden of Bethlehem will ripen in its season. Enervated as are our Florentines, they will rise and stand firm and upright. Wicked princes, and pontiffs wickeder still, have led them astray, corrupted and subjugated them; strangers, in conflict one with another, have trodden them down; liberators, as they called themselves and were believed, chained and sold them.

PRIOR. We have lived to see this in our own days. We must pray for them.

SAVONAROLA. *Ye* must, but others must rise from their knees. Such is the will of God: the Merciful is the Avenger.

PRIOR. We men of peace should be silent.

SAVONAROLA. Not when God commands us to speak and cry aloud. The Pontiff is a puppet in the hands of France, brought out and shut up again at her will and pleasure. There is no vision to our eyes of an emperor like Henry of Luxemburg. Dante Alighieri, Petrarcha, Boccaccio, were not only nightingales that sang in the dark—which all three did—but they were prophetic, and intelligible to the atten-

[1] *Sic.*

tive ear. The *Divina Commedia* should rather be entitled the *Divina Satira.* It has the fire of Phlegethon, and the bitterness of Styx.

What France ever was, she ever will be, a slave, the seller of slaves. Such have been lauded *in excelsis.* The wolf has degenerated into a fox, an animal by nature of shriller cry, yet approaching the sheep-fold more cautiously. There was a time when princes on horseback chased this animal; now they invest him with a golden collar, and domesticate him.

PRIOR. Beware! beware!

SAVONAROLA. Truth, it appears, is a virgin too pure to be embraced. Whatever most interests her seems most reprovable. Yet the more free our thoughts are, the nearer are they to that region where Truth resides. Certainly it is not in the Maremma Romana. God has taught me His holy Word, and has commanded me also to teach it.

PRIOR. They who find a jewel do not prudently and safely wear it in all places.

SAVONAROLA. We have found what is richer than a jewel, we have found what constitutes the bread of life. The wheat that nourishes nations was but a grain at first: many crops sprang from it, many were mildewed, many trodden underfoot, as we have seen and see now, yet the seed is incorruptible, and will endure for ever. Italy will not always be what Italy is now. The most acute of men will reason and reflect, and will drive away those who forbid it. What Christ has forbidden they will call to mind, and act accordingly. He forbade even his disciples to call him Lord. The impostor who calls himself, and orders others to call him *His Holiness*, *His Beatitude*, *God's Vicegerent*, etc., offends against God's express commandment.

PRIOR. Be cool, my brother.

SAVONAROLA. Presently I shall be, if anything be left of me after this day's festival, celebrated with Druidical rites.

PRIOR. That smile strikes into my inmost heart. Let us think rather of our Florentines. Let us hope for *them*, at least. Sound bodies may recover from heavy wounds, unsound succumb under lighter. If our Florentines are naturally brave, how greatly more brave will they become when they are virtuous. The corruption of a prince drops down on the heads and into the bosoms of a people. It is unsafe to animadvert on the living: we may look back on

Lorenzo de' Medici, dead recently. The defunct do not bite, and censure falls without weight on the sepulchre.

SAVONAROLA. When I was called to the bedside of that dying man, in order to hear his confession, according to the wish he had expresst, not a single one of his iniquities would he confess, nor any retribution would he offer of what he had taken from his country. "*First*," said I, "*restore to the people the liberty of which you deprived their fathers.*" He turned heavily round and disdainfully. I was silent, and left him.

PRIOR. Peace to his soul! if peace there can be where such souls are. Why could he not have been contented in the station to which his fortune and his genius had raised him? No other sovran in Europe possessed such rich and extensive lands. He could enjoy every climate in this little Tuscany. In Pisa there is no severity of winter, in Pratolino there is no oppressive heat. The breezes of the sea and of the Apennines were at his command. Here in Florence he had the familiar society of the learned and philosophic, and poets sat convivially at his table.

SAVONAROLA. These maggots accelerated his corruption.

PRIOR. The constitution of the poetic mind is naturally febrile, and is corroded in most by the chronic disease of jealousy. Lorenzo was subject to neither of these infirmities, not recognizing a rival in creatures so base. Adulation, if ever pardonable, is most so in poets. On Parnassus there are more flowers than fruits, the pasture is insufficient, and the air gives a keen appetite. The birds below perch on thorns, and when they alight they battle for a grain of millet. Not only poets, but persons in appearance more serious, consorted with Lorenzo: they might have taught him better.

SAVONAROLA. They should have learned better first. They spent days and nights in trivial, futile discussions, which they called Platonic.

PRIOR. Not improperly. The dialogues of Plato are mostly of no utility, for religion, morality, the sciences or the arts. They resemble the *pallone* with which our youthful citizens divert themselves, empty, turgid, round, weightless, thrown up into the air by one player, to be caught by another as it falls to the ground, and beaten back, bouncing, and covered with dust. In all his dialogues there is not a single one which impresses on the heart a virtuous or a tender sentiment, none of charity, none of philanthropy, none of patriotism.

SAVONAROLA. Oh, the littleness of such a philosophy! We Christians know the true; we know where to find it; we know where sits the teacher. It is better to be guided thro' thorns than to sit idly with chatterers.

PRIOR. It is well to ponder, but why pause now? And not very seriously.

SAVONAROLA. I was reminded by your observations and similitudes of another pastime, in which a girl lays her hand down flat, another claps hers upon it, and thus rapidly and alternately, until both are tired of it, and one gives a slap on the knuckles of her playfellow and runs off laughing.

PRIOR. Nothing discomposes my Jeronimo; I never found him so near to facetiousness before.

SAVONAROLA. I look more willingly at tricks played in petticoats than under beards. Let them be only such as these.

Do not rise to go yet, my kind father! What is there to see below?

PRIOR. Florence lies in bustle and confusion under the window: the sight makes me sorrowful.

SAVONAROLA. Courage, courage, my Prior! The Sun of Righteousness will shine again. The Prophets will show their countenances thro' the clouds, and make their voices heard. Dante Alighieri lies in his tomb at Ravenna, but his spirit will return to our city and reanimate a half-dead people. Italy is not always to be sown with lies and irrigated with blood. Her sons are to be aware that the wine of the Last Supper is not drugged, is neither stimulant nor narcotic.

PRIOR. What noise is that I hear? Whither are they coming, those four carts? With what are they laden?

SAVONAROLA. I will tell thee.

PRIOR. Why dost thou also rise from thy chair?

SAVONAROLA. Those carts are laden with faggots and stakes; one of the stoutest is several ells long. What a number of poor starving creatures might be comforted at Christmas by such a quantity of materials.

The people are impatient for their bonfire, and the priests for their dinner.

PRIOR. Embrace me, embrace me; sanctify a sinner. Jeronimo! shall we meet no more?

SAVONAROLA. Thou knowest that meet we shall; God alone knows when. The days of man are numbered: there is no room for another numeral to mine; the punctuation of a period is enough. My future is beginning in this piazza; I can yet look beyond it. The Florentines will soon forget me; already they have forgotten themselves. Oblivion soon comes over cities; memory rests longer on a few faithful hearts. I and my words may pass away, but never will God's, however now neglected.

May thy years be as many as thy virtues, and as the benedictions on thy venerable head.

Turn not again, as thou seemest about to do, toward that window. When the smoke has been carried off by the wind, and the clouds are dissipated, then return to San Marco.

VIII. MACCHIAVELLI AND GUICCIARDINI

(*Athenæum*, 1861; *Wks.*, v., 1876.)

GUICCIARDINI. It grieves me, Ser Niccolo, to learn by your letter that Fortune has been ungrateful and unjust to you. Hard is it that a statesman who hath served his country conscientiously and ably should be reduced so nearly to poverty.

MACCHIAVELLI. The hardship, my compassionate friend, lies chiefly in the necessity of entreating as a favour what I believe to be my due. Having served our Florence faithfully, I claim only a small remuneration from the Medici.

GUICCIARDINI. Gratitude is not in the vocabulary of princes: and Republics insist on every man's services, deeming him sufficiently paid for them by a place, however subordinate, in the government. You are become out of favour by writing what appears to be satirical in your *Principe*. Can you deny to me, who am your trusty and hearty friend, that, in this wise and profound work, you make it appear how such high functionaries, in order to acquire and retain their power, must act occasionally with violence and dishonesty?

MACCHIAVELLI. Is it not true?

GUICCIARDINI. And by being true is it not the more dangerous to him who utters and promulgates it?

MACCHIAVELLI. I desired to show my countrymen what they must expect if they prefer an absolute prince to a free republic.

GUICCIARDINI. All desires out of the domestic circle lead to disappointment, most of them to grief. Are we less tranquil than under the late regimen?

MACCHIAVELLI. The sleeper is more tranquil than the wide-awake, and the dead even than he.

GUICCIARDINI. It is somewhat for the generous, patriotic, and energetic, to have escaped persecution. After your commentary on Livy, I feared you might, notwithstanding all your caution and prudence, take up Tacitus. Then might you, peradventure, have been accused of personalities: Hemlock and Hellebore and other

simples, sedatives prescribed for the unruly, are to be gathered in Tuscany.

MACCHIAVELLI. Dante Alighieri, the glory of our country, dared openly to avow himself an innovator and reformer. He would have called in the Emperor of Germany to rule the whole of Italy.

GUICCIARDINI. Were it practicable it might have been well for us. The vilest and most ineradicable of vermin is that which generates in the skin: we can sweep away the outlying.

MACCHIAVELLI. No people can flourish where any man sets at defiance the magistrates and the laws. An appeal out of them is treason, and punishment should be summary and prompt. Beside a conclave of princes set over us by a priest, we, at present, lie ground between an upper and a nether millstone. Germany and France crush us into powder, and leave nothing but the husks. Better is it to be subject to the Emperor of Germany than to the King of France. For the German Powers would encourage our commerce through interest, the French through jealousy would repress it.

GUICCIARDINI. It was impossible for the Emperor of Germany to become sovran of Italy, as Alighieri wished, and ventured to propose, unless by abolishing the temporal power of the Pope.

MACCHIAVELLI. Republican as I am, I would willingly see all Italy under one constitutional hereditary prince. At present we have no choice between the bear and the wolf. The bear hugs to suffocation, breaks a few ribs, then, tearing out a mouthful, lies down. The wolf springs at the throat, strangles the animal, tears the heart out, and laps up the last drop of blood. Neither you nor I can speculate far into the future. Yet we both of us can see clearly what is about us and nigh. The French are incapable of freedom, and will never let others enjoy it. The Germans have as much liberty as they want or know what to do with. They are a moral people and sigh after the purity of religion. It appears to be an axiom with princes that the more corruptions there are in it the more easily are men governed. But under a good government a religion will gradually become good, and revolutions will be unnecessary. I do not believe that during our lifetime there will be any in this country. Yet who could have foreseen the prodigious one which has been lately almost accomplisht in the Netherlands? There are now living many men, and not extremely old, who remember Spain the most powerful and the most prosperous of kingdoms. What is she now become! England

crushed her armado, and left her scarcely enough of its timbers for an auto da fé. Nearer to ourselves than the scene where Spain sank, never to rise again, the Hollanders are cooking their fish to-day over the splinters they have broken off from the old fisherman's chair, while the banners of Castile and Leon droop in ignominy over the Knights of the Garter.

Now to the matter of union and consolidation.

England could unite to her discordant kingdoms and divers races, speaking different languages. Is it indeed going too far in speculation that the provinces of Italy, both on the Peninsula and on the Adriatic, living in harmony and speaking in the same mother tongue, may become united ?

GUICCIARDINI. On such a consummation you, a republican, hardly can dream.

MACCHIAVELLI. I do dream of it, and when I am most awake. My republicanism is for my country, not for my city. Florence was my cradle, Florence taught me my letters, but there were masters who made me hold up my head and walk with them beyond the gates.

GUICCIARDINI. The nurse had well nigh shaken thee out of the cradle, and the masters have brought thee among thorns. We all have our projects, and generally on things farthest from our reach. The most accredited of philosophers often tread upon unsound ground. Never was a scheme less practicable than Plato's Republic, redundant with whims and puerilities. Did no obstruction lie in your path on your road to the consolidation of Italy ? Did never the two rival cities, Genoa and Venice, rise up before you ? Both of them are opulent and powerful : both would be more opulent and more powerful by going hand in hand.

But Venice, whose nobility is higher than any other in Europe, would never take the ring off her finger. She is queen of the Adriatic, and arbitress of the Levant. Remembering that she hath often set at defiance both Emperor and Pope, she would receive any sovran, and most unwillingly one from across the Alps.

MACCHIAVELLI. Never was any government so politic as hers hath continued to be from century to century, never any people so long contented. In other countries the nobles are the worst of slaves because they adulate the worst of masters. Flattery in Venice is no less exuberant, but the victorious admiral or the cherisht maiden are

the flattered. Ariosto breathes his spirit into the gondoleer, by day and by night, and music swells above the ripples of the lagoon.

GUICCIARDINI. Ser Niccolo, you are growing quite poetical.

MACCHIAVELLI. Venice herself is poetry, and creates a poet out of the dullest clay. Woe betide the wretch who desecrates and humiliates her! She may fall, but she shall rise again.

GUICCIARDINI. Our hopes at the present time must rest contentedly. It was impossible for the Emperor of Germany to become sole sovran of Italy, as Alighieri wished, abolishing the temporal power of the Pope. France and Spain are interested in maintaining it; that is, they are playing as partners, sitting on opposite sides of the table. If Italy is ever to be under one potentate, the only one eligible is the Duke of Savoy, he being already her guardian. Care, however, must be taken that his family never intermarry with the stranger. We have families in our own country more illustrious by exploits and wisdom than the Bourbons or the Hapsburgs, and if antiquity, as it seems to be, is considered a title to reverence, we have fifty more ancient. With other nations, if ours were united, we should require no alliances. They would only involve us in difficulties and wars.

Freedom of traffic is advantageous to all. When the seas are open man's eyes will open. We want little from abroad, and we shall want less. Our wines are richer than those of Spain, which usually taste of the pigskin or goatskin, and the best of the French owe their odour and flavour to the root of that lily which grows profusely in the crevices and on the summits of our city-walls. These roots we never use but for perfumery, and export them in quantities from Livorno. The wool of Taranto celebrated by Virgil in his Georgics, is less deteriorated than everything else in the Neapolitan territory. We might clothe our wealthier neighbours with it, as we do with our silks and velvets. Manufacturers of linen and lace would easily be tempted from the Netherlands. Sicily and Sardinia could produce not only a profusion of flax, but also of cotton. The island of Sardinia is scarcely a quarter peopled. Horace celebrates its "segetes feraces." There is in it a more extensive and a more fertile plain than perhaps in any other island.

MACCHIAVELLI. Nothing can be hoped for where priests and monks swarm in all seasons. Other grubs and insects die down, these never do. Even locusts, after they have consumed the grain and herbage, take flight or are swept away, and leave no living

progeny on the ground behind them. The vermin between skin and flesh are ineradicable.

GUICCIARDINI. What can we do with the religious?

MACCHIAVELLI. Teach them religion. Teach them to earn by labour the bread they eat. Some confraternities work already, make all do.

GUICCIARDINI. Remember, there are aged and infirm in monasteries: to deprive them of a decent and comfortable subsistence as was done in England, would be inhumane, not to them only, but also to the poor wretches who lived by them.

MACCHIAVELLI. It would be: but such a case might be obviated, by stationing them in their native towns and villages, where friends are living. The less afflicted may visit the sick and instruct the children: few of them can do more, or are willing to do so much. The bishops, out of their vast revenues, ought to supply whatever may yet be needful.

GUICCIARDINI. Perhaps you would curtail their revenues and their number.

MACCHIAVELLI. Jesus Christ ordained twelve to preach his gospel to all nations. Surely twice the number is sufficient for Italy. I would allow a spacious house and garden to each, and 2000 crowns* annually from the public treasury. Sardinia and wild Corsica might also have each of them four prelates.

GUICCIARDINI. Sardinia in another century could be what she was under the old Romans.

MACCHIAVELLI. Religion in their time was no hinderer [1] of labour, no encourager of idleness, no mendicant in purple and fine linen and a jewelled bonnet three stories high.

Another generation will see better things, another, but not the next.

GUICCIARDINI. After the *Purgatorio* we arrive at the *Paradiso!* Vision! vision!

MACCHIAVELLI.[2] Holy visions are at last accomplished.

* 2000 crowns at that time were equal to 5000 now. The French Bishops have about £700, with houses in their cities, not palaces.—W. S. L.

[1] Crump follows the text in the *Athenæum*, reading "cinderer."

[2] The spelling "Macchiavelli" has been retained.